AND VEGETABLES FOR ALL: URBAN AND CIVIC AGRICULTURE IN KANSAS CITY AND VISIONS FOR THE U.S. AGRIFOOD SYSTEM

by

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B.S., Northern Arizona University, 1998
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AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work
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Abstract

In the United States, many are critical of agricultural policies and economic incentives that support large-scale food production and the dominant actors in the mainstream agrifood system. Critics point out that at the same time agribusinesses and very large-scale farmers receive support, there are those in poverty who struggle to meet their food needs. Critics question what that relationship should be between civil society and the agrifood system. A variety of activities are addressing concerns of social injustices in the system. For example, participation is increasing in civic and urban agriculture. Civic agriculture is the interrelated activities of small-scale, socially and environmentally sound practices of food production and consumption that aim to increase community sustainability. Urban agriculture is food production in and near cities. By focusing on Kansas and the Kansas City metropolitan area, this dissertation addresses the following questions: How do the relations between civil society and the U.S. agrifood system impact the level of fairness in the system? To what extent are urban agricultural activities fostering fairness in the agrifood system, including access to fresh foods, civic engagement, and fulfilling careers, while also benefiting the environmental health of the city?

Survey and interview data collected by a research team on agriculture in Kansas sets the context for my examination of urban agriculture in Kansas City's urban core. In addition to participant observations and primary and secondary data analysis, I conducted 38 semi-structured interviews with growers (27), food advocates (4), community organizers (4), and governmental employees (3). In Kansas City, many of the activities and programs in place are building community, strengthening civil society, and promoting food justice for the poor and for people of color, for example, in food deserts, which are locales where people particularly face challenges

in meeting their food needs. While some participants are more focused on their immediate communities and less so on overt widespread change, others feel a part of a social movement aiming to change the agrifood system. Diverse people from various social classes and races are increasingly becoming involved in growing food and food advocacy to expand fairness in the system.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

> [F]or the majority of the world's population, food is not just an item of consumption, it's actually a way of life. It has deep material and symbolic power. And because it embodies the links between nature, human survival and health, culture and livelihood, it will, and has already, become a focus of contention and resistance to a corporate takeover of life itself (McMichael 2000:31-32).

The dominant social structures and processes involved in getting food from the ground to the people in the United States is an intricate, often global endeavor. Gillespie and Gillespie Jr. (2000) explain the "[f]ood [s]ystem includes the foundations for food production, the social aspects of consumption, and relevant government and other policies, as well as the actual growing, processing, and distributing of substances that results in foods that people consume" (p. 2). What they define as the food system others refer to as the agriculture and food system (i.e., agrifood system). Despite the discourse and images of agrarian ideology which idealizes rural life and small family farming, a large share of the food we eat comes from non-family and large-scale family owned farms[1] in the United States and from farms across the world. The average distance food travels from the field to the plate is over 1000 miles (Weber and Matthews 2008). Food does not reach everybody. In 2011, 14.9 percent of U.S. households were considered food insecure (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). Those considered food insecure do not have sufficient access or abilities to meet their food needs (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012).

While large-scale farmers, corporations, and the government aim to maintain the globally linked, mainstream U.S. agrifood system, other producers and consumers are more focused on

[1] A farm is "any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year" (USDA 2009:viii). "Family farms include any farm where the majority of the business is owned by the operator and individuals related to the operator" (Hoppe and MacDonald 2013:iii).

closer relationships with their growing and buying activities. Lyson (2004) calls this movement civic agriculture, where "civic agriculture is the embedding of local agricultural and food production in the community. . . . [Citing Delind (2002),] civic agricultural enterprises contribute to the health and vitality of communities in a variety of social, economic, political, and cultural ways" (p. 62). Food is increasingly being produced on very small farms and in cities. From vacant city lots to rooftops, gardens are flourishing. Many are aiming to increase access to fresh foods and to reduce food insecurity, thus increasing fairness in the agrifood system.

In this dissertation I utilize a food systems approach. Brown and Schafft (2011) explain, "[v]iewing agriculture from the food systems perspective enables one to examine farming's role in national and global economies. . . . but it also illuminates agriculture's contributions to a wide range of social, environmental and biological issues ranging from human health, to conservation, to international relations, to community development" (p. 180). By focusing on Kansas and the Kansas City metropolitan area, I addresses the following questions:

> (1) How do the relations between civil society and the U.S. agrifood system impact the level of fairness in the system?
> (2) To what extent are urban agricultural activities fostering fairness in the agrifood system, including access to fresh foods, civic engagement, and fulfilling careers, while also benefiting the environmental health of the city?

The issue of concern here is how the relations between civil society and the U.S. agrifood system impact the level of fairness in the system. Civil society is the social area between the economy and the state (Cohen and Arato 1992). By focusing on the manifestation of urban agriculture as civic agriculture, I explore the extent to which urban agriculture in Kansas City is fostering fairness in the system in terms of access to fresh foods, civic engagement, fulfilling careers, and the environmental health of the city. The examination focuses on the issues of access to fresh foods and civicness (i.e., civic engagement) and to a much lesser extent it touches

upon employment and environmental issues. At times I use community engagement as a proxy for civic engagement and civicness. In the context of the U.S. agrifood system, whether consciously or unconsciously many urban agricultural activities are strengthening communities and civil society. Some feel they are part of a movement or movements that are aiming to make the agrifood system more economically, environmentally, and socially just. At the same time, while there are those who do not feel united with any food movements as they work toward enhancing their own and their communities' well-being they may in fact be contributing to the movements that aim to change the agrifood system.

U.S. Civil Society and Agrifood System Relations

Depending on the theorists' views of state and society relations, they have differing ideas on the role and power of civil society. For example, Bellah et al. ([1985] 1996), Putnam (1993, 1995), and Eliasoph (1998) all argue civil society has the capacity to strengthen itself by people uniting together in more civic groups and being more active in community activities and in the broader arena of politics. For Putnam, people need to build social capital to get a responsive state. Somers (2008) cautions the push for civil society groups to step it up and create better communities and a stronger society. Instead, she says the state needs to step in and regain the balance between itself, civil society, and the market. Lyson (2004), citing Karl Polanyi (1944), argues the economy needs to be embedded in social relations instead of it being a separate sphere where economic transactions take precedence over social relations. Instead of business being conducted without consideration for social consequences, Lyson asserts that economic transactions should be carried out in a manner that takes into account the possible social implications of those transactions before they occur. In terms of agriculture and food, Lyson argues for a more socially embedded agrifood system. Engaging in civically-minded urban

agriculture can be one way to build stronger social relationships around food production and consumption, which promotes fairness in the agrifood system.

U.S. Agrifood Policies and Programs

During the Great Depression in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced numerous bills with the aim to provide relief from the Depression. This legislation was called the New Deal. One of the first pieces of legislation passed was the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) of 1933 which provided subsidies to farmers who reduced the acreage they had in production (Ganzel 2003). The aim was to avoid surpluses and to keep prices higher. In 1937 the act was declared unconstitutional because of how the tax structure was set in place to fund the program (Ganzel 2003). However, the agricultural bills to follow were based on the general ideas set forth in the AAA of 1933 (Ganzel 2003). This major agricultural legislation came to be known as the Farm Bill even though each piece of legislation has its own name, for example the Agricultural Act of 1970 and the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Farm Bills have been passed approximately every five or six years since 1965. While there are other laws that address agriculture and food, the Farm Bill is considered to be a comprehensive piece of legislation that aims to address a variety of agriculture and food issues (Johnson and Monke 2012).

In addition to the agricultural programs, food assistance and nutrition assistance programs are also part of legislation and the Farm Bill in particular. For example, Under the AAA of 1935 the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation was renamed the Food Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC), and it was charged with distributing surplus commodities by promoting domestic consumption of U.S. farmers' surplus (USDA-FNS 2013a). In addition, after a temporary Food Stamp Program (FSP) was in place from May of 1939 to the spring of 1943 and a pilot FSP was

run from May of 1961 to 1964, on August 31, 1964, under President Johnson, the Food Stamp Act of 1964 was passed which made the FSP permanent (USDA-FNS 2013a). This legislation aimed to provide increased levels of nutritional support to low-income households and to support the agricultural economy (USDA-FNS 2013a).

Concerns with the Dominant U.S. Agrifood System

Recently, concerns with the U.S. agrifood system, including environmental, social, and economic issues, have been growing (Allen 2004). Focusing on the social and economic aspects, many believe the agrifood system is not fair. They believe nutritious, clean food should be a right and everyone deserves equal access to it (Allen 1999; Poppendieck 1999; Wekerle 2004; Levkoe 2006; Johnston 2008). However for these critics, this is not the current experience. Many are critical that U.S. agricultural policies and economic incentives have long supported large-scale, chemical intensive food production[2] and the mainstream agrifood system focusing on the production of commodities, including corn, soybeans, and wheat and less on fruits and vegetables. Also, large-scale farmers receive more of the benefits from governmental subsidy programs than do smaller-scale farmers (Lyson 2004; Domhoff 2010).

Some argue the food system is dominated by corporations (Magdoff, Foster, and Buttel 2000; Lyson 2004). Economic power is concentrated by a few firms in each of a number of agrifood sectors (Heffernan 2000). This economic power is often consequentially political power. Critics point out that at the same time the dominant actors receive support, there are those in poverty who struggle to meet their food needs (i.e., the food insecure). Although federally funded social programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provide some

[2] By chemical intensive food production I mean production using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

support, critics argue it is not enough. Critics question what the relationship should be between civil society and the agrifood system and how food security can be increased (Allen 1999; Poppendieck 1999).

Alternatives to Sole Reliance on the Dominant Agrifood System

More people are questioning and acting on their concerns with the agrifood system (Poppendieck 1999; Allen 2004; Hinrichs and Barham 2008). McMichael (2000) expresses that "the world food order is increasingly fragile, supplemented by ad hoc food assistance programs, and countered by alternative agricultures" (p. 21). A variety of actions and civic engagement activities are addressing concerns of social injustices, environmental degradation, and quality in the agrifood system (Allen 2004). In terms of addressing social inequalities and promoting fairness in the system, this includes activities in civil society such as home and community gardening, alternative food institutions such as farmers' markets that occur between civil society and the market, and actions that link civil society and the state more directly, such as residents'[3] work on food policy councils. For some, these activities are part of a food movement or movements that are challenging the dominant system. For others, these activities are primarily for better nutrition and health for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Since the early 1980s with decreases in governmental aid, there has been an increase in the number of food assistance outlets, such as food banks and soup kitchens offering food to those in need (Poppendieck 1999). During the 1990s to early 2000s, initiatives such as farmers' markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) which aim "to remake the North American food system have become more widespread and diversified" (Hinrichs and Barham 2008:345).

[3] In places in the text I use the term resident instead of citizen to include those who live in the United States, but who may not be U.S. citizens. For example, some participants in agrifood activities are refugees from their homelands.

There are various foci for these activities, and they are referred to in numerous ways, including alternative agrifood movements (Allen 2004), civic agriculture (Lyson 2004), the food justice movement (Levkoe 2006; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Alkon and Agyeman 2011), and urban agriculture (Gottlieb 2001). Lyson (2004) explains the interrelated activities of small-scale food production, direct marketing, and socially and environmentally sound practices of food production and consumption, which promotes community well-being, can be viewed as civic agriculture. For Alkon and Agyeman (2011), "[t]he food justice movement combines an analysis of racial and economic injustice with practical support for environmentally sustainable alternatives that can provide economic empowerment and access to environmental benefits in marginalized communities" (p. 6). Urban agriculture, although it is not necessarily separate from alternative agrifood movements, civic agriculture, or the food justice movement, it is more locale based. Urban agriculture is intensive food production (i.e., plants and animals), along with its processing and distribution, that occurs within and near cities (Bailkey and Nasr 1999).

Allen (2004) observes that while the alternative food movements are various, "there remains a certain consistency in the types of alternative agrifood institutions named," including farmers' markets, CSAs, urban agriculture programs, community gardens, school gardens, food cooperatives, food policy councils, and "food-based education" programs (p. 64-65). Alternative institutions are proliferating. In 1994, it was estimated there were 1,755 farmers' markets and by 2012 there were 7,864 (USDA-AMS 2012). While there were 400 CSA farms in 1993, by 2006 it is estimated there were 12,549 farms involved in CSAs (USDA 2009). While farm-to-school programs were rare in the 1990s, by 2010 there were over 2,000 (NFSN N.d.). In 1979 there were 88,238 participants in urban garden programs (Lawson 2005). By 2008, it was estimated that while there were 33 million households with home gardens, there were 1 million households

participating in community gardens (National Gardening Association 2009). In addition, urban agricultural activities, including home, school, and community gardens, are flourishing in cities across the nation, including, for example, San Francisco, Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and New York.

Civic Agriculture and Urban Agriculture

Lyson (2004) differentiates between commodity agriculture and civic agriculture. Conventional commodity agriculture tends to be larger-scale production focused on efficiency and productivity which extensively uses land to intensively produce crops for distant markets. "Commodity agriculture has become synonymous with industrial agriculture" (Lyson 2004:100). This agriculture is chemical intensive in that it tends to utilize chemical inputs, such as synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, with the aim to increase production on the least amount of land possible. Civic agriculture tends to be smaller-scale, more sustainable production focused less on profit maximization and more on socio-economic connections with local consumers often through direct marketing at, for example, farmers' markets. Lyson (2004) argues that democracy promotes civic agriculture and that by engaging "in the food system, civic agriculture has the potential to transform individuals from passive consumers into active food citizens" (p. 77). Citing Frank Young (1999), Lyson states, "[a] food citizen is someone who has not only a stake but also a voice in how and where his or her food is produced, processed, and sold" (2004:77). To what extent does the configuration of the U.S. state, society, and market relations allow for people to be food citizens?

Urban agriculture can be, but not necessarily is, one form of civic agriculture. For example, some grow food for their own consumption because they enjoy gardening as a hobby and others produce food with the primary aim to make a profit. These types of growers are not

necessarily aiming to build community or to propel a social movement aimed at promoting fairness in the agrifood system by increasing access to food for those in need, for example.

I look at the critiques of the unfairness of the agrifood system by focusing on civic agriculture and specifically urban agriculture. In cities across the United States, urban agricultural activities are underway, and they are growing in number. The manifestations of urban agriculture are various, from backyard gardens to rooftops and from vacant lots to market oriented farms. Urban growers can be categorized into six, often overlapping, groups: (1) home gardeners, (2) community gardeners, (3) charitable growers, (4) school (or institutional) gardeners, (5) educational gardeners, and (6) market growers (see Brown and Carter 2003; Lawson 2005). Home gardeners grow food in and around their homes for their own use. Community gardeners sometimes partner with their city government(s) to grow in vacant lots, green spaces, or in parks. Typically, gardens are divided into plots maintained by individuals or groups, including families. Charitable groups with gardens primarily donate the food they grow. Gardens located on school grounds are used as food sources, educational tools, and physical activity opportunities for the youth (Lawson 2005). Additionally, institutions such as hospitals and prisons sometimes have gardens as well. Educational programs run by non-profit organizations, including after school programs or entrepreneurial programs, sometimes include gardening and nutrition education. Market growers predominantly sell their crops, whether through direct marketing, via CSAs and farmers' markets for example, and/or wholesale to restaurants, stores, processors, or other businesses.

Agriculture in Kansas

Typical of Midwestern agriculture, farming in Kansas is primarily the large-scale conventional production of commodities by family owned farms. In 2007, over 97 percent of

Kansas farms were owned by individuals/families or partnerships, while only 0.4 percent of farms were controlled by non-family corporations (USDA-ERS 2013b). In 2007, nearly 88 percent of all of the principal operators in Kansas were male, and 98.9 percent of all principal operators were white (USDA 2009). Almost 41 percent said they worked 200 or more days off of the farm (USDA 2009). Crops and livestock have long been prevalent across the Kansas landscape. The crops that have traditionally been grown include wheat, corn, sorghum, and soybeans. In 2011, the top five commodities in Kansas were (1) cattle and calves, which accounted for 48 percent of the state's total farm receipts, (2) corn, 16 percent, (3) wheat, 12 percent, (4) soybeans, 8 percent, and (5) sorghum grain, 4 percent (USDA-ERS 2013b).

On a much smaller scale, specialty crops are also grown (e.g., fruit and vegetables) in rural, suburban, and urban areas. For example, in 2007, while 11,839 farms sold almost $1.7 billion worth of corn, which does not include sweet corn, 818 farms sold $32 million worth of fruits and vegetables, which includes melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and nuts (USDA 2009). While Kansas City is surrounded by farming and ranching on the Kansas side and on the Missouri side, there are farms in and near the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of Kansas City, which encompasses 15 counties in Missouri and Kansas, which often market to consumers in the MSA. Farm sizes and products differ, but in the urban city limits people and groups are increasingly growing fruits and vegetables whether it is mostly for their own consumption, to sell, or to give away. Despite the statewide support for conventional commodity agriculture in Kansas and in Missouri, the numbers of gardens and farms and the extent of participation in urban agricultural activities in Kansas City is increasing. Many of the initiatives in Kansas City aim to increase fairness in the agrifood system by expanding access to fresh fruits and

vegetables; by offering civic engagement and networking opportunities; by involving people of various ages, races, and social classes; and by providing food production and nutrition education.

The Plan for the Chapters Ahead

Chapter two, "Theory and Literature: U.S. Civil Society and Agrifood System Relations," examines theory and literature on the relations between civil society and the agrifood system in the United States. Then I discuss the development and current status of the U.S. agrifood system, including a discussion of agricultural production and food assistance policies and programs. Based in the literature on alternative agrifood activities and movements, I then provide critiques of the system. Many do not believe the dominant system is fair or sustainable. Lastly, I discuss civic agriculture, urban agriculture, and food justice as specific forms and discourses of alternative agrifood activities.

Chapter three, "Methods," details the methods used to carry out my study. I further discuss my critical and interpretive food systems approach to the context of the U.S. agrifood system. I explain my focus on agriculture in Kansas and Kansas City and the data used in the analysis. The data used was survey and interview data collected on agriculture in Kansas, by a Kansas National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, Biofuels and Climate Change: Farmers' Land Use Decisions (KS NSF EPSCoR BACC: FLUD) research team and data I collected via solo fieldwork in Kansas City on urban agriculture. Almost all of my fieldwork occurred between June 2012 and December 2012. I engaged in participant observations; primary and secondary data analysis; and 38 semi-structured interviews with growers (27), food advocates (4), community organizers (4), and government employees (3). Lastly, I discuss how the data was organized and analyzed.

Chapter four, "Perspectives on the U.S. Agrifood System," is a discussion of agriculture and interviewees views on agriculture and food. I start by discussing commodity farming in Kansas and some of the results from the BACC: FLUD study. Then I turn the focus to introducing the Kansas City interviewees and sharing their thoughts on the agrifood system, governmental policies and programs, and the governments' role in agriculture and food.

Chapter five, "Civicness of Urban Agriculture," focuses on urban agriculture and particularly urban agriculture as civic agriculture in Kansas City. I discuss how it is promoting fairness in the agrifood system by increasing access to fresh foods, increasing civic engagement, and building networks, which builds community around food and strengthens civil society. It is also greening the city when residents clean up vacant lots by removing trash and instead they put in gardens of vegetables, fruits, and sometimes flowers. Volunteer opportunities and jobs are being created--although the jobs are often part-time and/or seasonal, and they provide wages close to the minimum wage. Some of the positions are in the field of education and are supported by grant funding that may last from a short period of time, such as one year, to a longer period of time, such as a few years. In addition, through urban agriculture social spaces are created that can bring people of different races, classes, and ages together to work on a common project.

Chapter six, "Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System," is a forward looking discussion on agriculture and food in the United States. First, there is a discussion on the concerns many of the farmers interviewed for the BACC: FLUD study have for the future of their farms. The rest of the chapter focuses on Kansas City interviewees' visions for the future of urban agriculture in Kansas City and the future of U.S. agriculture more broadly. This includes a discussion of food movement(s) and the interviewees' views on the future of the food movement(s).

Chapter seven, “Conclusion,” is the concluding chapter where I summarize the dissertation, discuss its limitations and contributions, and suggest avenues for future research. The discussion includes an examination of the challenges faced by participants in urban agriculture.

Chapter 2 - Theory and Literature: U.S. Civil Society and Agrifood System Relations

How societies are structured by social institutions and social processes affects and is affected by the actions of people. This is not to say that the social structure of any given society is easily mutable by its populace. There are differences of opinion on the degrees of influence people have in a society, and there are various suggestions on how people, civil society, can improve their circumstances and increase their influence in general and in regards to particular issues. Cohen and Arato (1992) define civil society "as a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication" (p. ix). In relation to the agrifood system, there are a variety of activities people are engaged in that are building community and strengthening civil society whether the people are particularly trying to or not. Producing food in the city can be done in a way that not only increases access to fresh foods for those in need, but it can also develop community, boost civil society, and promote fairness in the agrifood system. Urban agriculture can be civic agriculture and progress toward fairness and food justice can be outcomes.

The U.S. State and Civil Society

Weber's conceptualization of the state is a common starting point in discussing what the state is and what it is not. For Weber (1978), "A compulsory political organization with continuous operations... will be called a 'state' insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of

its order" (p. 54; emphasis in original). Weber continues to explain that the threat of or use of force is usually a last measure taken and not a first response. While Weber defines the general structure of a state, Bendix (1977) provides more details. In distinguishing modern nation-states from the patrimonial-feudal structure, Bendix explains the nation-state is not based on hereditary rule and a king's authority over his land, the government, and the subjects. Instead nation-states are characterized by the division of the social realm, including families, and the realm of administrative and judicial matters (Bendix 1977:128). He details some of the main tasks of bureaucracies under a nation-state to be the following: building public facilities, running the postal service, facilitating military operations, presiding over currency matters, collecting income and taxes, and settling legal disagreements.

While recognizing that states have specific functions as mentioned by Bendix, Jessop (2008), through his strategic-relational approach, focuses on discussing states in a more abstract manner. He views states relationally as existing in constant interplay with their societies and other states in an inter-state system. For Jessop states are embedded in a larger political system (2008:6). Jessop explains that at the same time the state apparatus is just another institution that interacts with other institutions, the population, and other states, each state is responsible for the task of striving to create and maintain unity within the smaller system it is involved with. He explains that because states have specific responsibilities and powers, they are somewhat autonomous. Social scientists have differing views on the degree of autonomy states have.

Theories on the state range from emphasizing the state as a neutral institution, seeing it as more of an autonomous entity, to viewing it as significantly influenced by a dominant class. Neuman (2005) details three main theoretical approaches to the state: (1) the pluralist approach, (2) managerial approaches, which encompass elite theory and state-centered theories (also

referred to as statist, state capacity, state-autonomy, or institutional), and (3) class-analysis approaches which include instrumental and ruling class models. Some also view the state as racialized (see Omi and Winant 1994; Valocchi 1994; and James and Redding 2005) and/or gendered (see Hobson 2005; Abramovitz 1996; and Haney 2000) in how they have developed and how they privilege dominant groups (i.e., whites and/or men) over minority groups (i.e, people of color and/or women). The focus here is on the three main approaches. Theorists do not always fall squarely into one of the three approaches, and instead the frameworks should be seen as running along a continuum with some theories blending into others.

The pluralist approach views power in the political realm as dispersed among competing groups, where one group does not hold more power over others for any long period of time. At times a group can exert power and have decisions made in their favor regarding a specific issue, and at other times that specific group may not be effective in getting their preferences met. Considering community power, Polsby (1960) states the pluralist view holds "that power may be tied to issues, and issues can be fleeting or persistent, provoking coalitions among interested groups and citizens ranging in their duration from momentary to semi-permanent" (p. 478). Neuman (2005) explains the pluralist framework assumes the state is neutral and separated from society and the economy and that governments act democratically. As discussed by Neuman (2005) and Bellamy (2001), pluralists are interested in functional qualities of stability and order and do not focus on long-term conflicts and struggle. Bellamy explains those pluralists who do examine struggles speak more of it as short-term competition in an otherwise stable environment. Bellamy discusses pluralists' beliefs that various groups have more power at times when others do not, and on average there is not one group that dominates all of the others.

For Neuman (2005) the managerial approaches which encompass elite theory and state-centered theories have a different perspective which is more focused on social structure (p. 91). These approaches do not allow for as much power for individuals and interest groups as the pluralist approach does. As Neuman mentions and Mills ([1956] 2000) detailed, the elite rule framework views society as stratified between a group of elites--who make the major decisions for everyone--and the rest of society who are largely seen as a mass of people who do not have the power to properly organize against the elite. For Mills, the elite are those decision-makers at the top of the military, economic, and political spheres ([1956] 2000:6). Mills explained the layers of society, with the elite and their advisors and public relations managers on the top; a layer below the elite consisting of politicians, including Congress, interest groups, and the social elite; and the masses of people at the bottom. Mills argued that the people are continually being separated into a mass of individuals unable to organize themselves against the elite.

Skocpol (1985) and others have a more state-centered view of politics than the elite theorists. For Skocpol (1985), the organizational focus of Weber's view of the state is more realistic than viewing it is as an arena of action or as an instrument of a ruling-class. In Skocpol's view, states have a degree of autonomy that keeps them from being a mere instrument. With this autonomy, states are able to interact, shape, and be shaped by other states through international communications and activities (Skocpol 1985). Skocpol recognizes that the ability of states to express autonomy varies with time and place, and it is not guaranteed to exist. She does not argue that all activities by states are error-free or effective; rather, at times they are and at other times they are not. However, in Skocpol's view, states do have the capacity--which also varies by degree--to act autonomously. The ability of states to act in their own interests is related to the resources it has, the capacity it has, to act. Again, for Skocpol, states exist in relation with other

organizations (e.g., other states and interest organizations) and it is expected that they all impact each other and their abilities to act. At times, states can be strong and experience a heightened capacity to act in their interests above others, sometimes they have moderate strength, and at other times states are weak and incapable of acting on their own.

Focusing on the United States, one of the main class-analysis approaches where the state is seen as shaped by a corporate community is Domhoff's (2010) power-structure approach. Domhoff (2010) asserts that, at the national level, power is concentrated in the corporate community. For the most part, the corporate community is able to steer the state in its interests. Domhoff argues business activities in general (e.g., outsourcing and relying more on a part-time labor force), corporate lawyers, interlocking directorates, and influence by the corporate community in the policy-planning network, including in policy-discussion groups, foundations, and think tanks contribute to the power of the corporate community in dominating at the national level. In addition, strategic alliances, contract work done by small businesses and part-time workers for corporations, corporate lobbying in D.C., and the capitalist mentality held by the upper class (including corporations) also contribute to their power. Domhoff paints a grim picture of the strength of the corporate community to steer the government and the people. However, he argues the structural power of the corporate community is not deterministic. He explains that the state and the people do have the capacity to act against the corporate community. In addition, the corporate community is not certain that the populace and the government will always act in their favor so it has to continually work to influence the government (Domhoff 2010).

As discussed, pluralists believe groups in civil society have agency and can have their voices heard and their wishes met in the political realm. For managerialists, if they are even able

to organize effectively, civil society groups do not have much of an impact in the political realm, but actions and protests against the state can sometimes be effective. For class-analysts, such as Domhoff, there are times when cleavages occur in the dominant class and groups and movements can exploit those cleavages and promote their interests.

U.S. Civil Society

As mentioned, Cohen and Arato (1992) view civil society as the social realm between the economy and the state. Focusing on civil society, Barber (1995) further details the differences between the spheres:

> Civil society, or civic space, occupies the middle ground between government and the private sector. It is not where we vote and it is not where we buy and sell; it is where we talk with neighbors about a crossing guard, plan a benefit for our community school, discuss how our church or synagogue can shelter the homeless . . . In this domain, we are 'public' beings and share with government a sense of publicity and a regard for the general good and the commonweal; but unlike government, we make no claim to exercise a monopoly on legitimate coercion . . . It is in this domain that our traditional civic institutions such as foundations, schools, churches, public interest and other voluntary civic associations properly belong. The media too, where they take their public responsibilities seriously and subordinate their commercial needs to their civic obligations, are part of civil society. (P. 281)

Tocqueville (1935, 1940) saw democracy working in the United States with an active, engaged citizenry often organized into associations. Bellah et al. ([1985] 1996), Putnam (1993), and Eliasoph (1998) argue people can strengthen civil society by engaging more in community groups, voluntary associations, and political activities. Polanyi ([1944] 2001) argues that a market economy left unregulated will have disastrous impacts on society, and that cultural institutions need to be a part of that society so that it is not overrun by the effects of the market system. Somers (2008) asserts that to strengthen civil society it will take more than residents' actions. She argues the state needs to reestablish a balance between it, civil society, and the

market. Granovetter (1985) takes a middle ground position between the extremes of undersocialized and oversocialized views on the extent that economic actions are embedded in social relations. Citing Karl Polanyi (1944), Lyson (2004) argues that what needs to happen to strike a balance between social, economic, and political affairs is to re-embed the economy in society so that economic transactions do not take precedence over social life.

When Tocqueville traveled to America from France in 1931 to research the penal system he decided to also study the democracy he saw in action in the United States. He traveled around the Union and spoke with numerous people about their experiences. Tocqueville was impressed with what he saw as extensive democracy where the people were engaged in the affairs of society, and the voice of this majority was strong and held sway over the governments. The states were stronger than the Federal Government, and overall the citizens were well informed about the laws and powers of each level of government. He was concerned that a tyranny of the majority could occur with how much power he thought public opinion had over the governments. In addition, Tocqueville was impressed with the variety, depth, and breadth of the associations the citizens formed with the aims of meeting the goals they set out to achieve. Political associations focused on the politics of the day and civil associations covered a broad range of topics. Tocqueville (1935) explained:

> Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds -religious, moral, serious, futile, extensive, or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found establishments for education, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools. If it be proposed to advance some truth, or to foster some feeling by the encouragement of a great example, they form a society. (P. 581)

Tocqueville argued that people were less likely to work together in a democratic environment, and the successes of associations helped them to see the benefits of joining together. Tocqueville argues for the necessity of associations in democracy:

> Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed by no other means than by the reciprocal influence of men [sic] upon each other. I have shown that these influences are almost null in democratic countries; they must therefore be artificially created, and this can only be accomplished by associations (1935:583-584).

Additionally, he explains that involvement in political associations, in part, teach people the benefits of joining together in organizations and this leads to more people being involved voluntarily in public associations. Tocqueville argued associations are necessary to support a democracy: "[i]f men [sic] are to remain civilized, or to become so, the art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio in which the equality of conditions is increased" (1935:585).

Bellah et al. ([1985] 1996) conducted participant observations and interviewed two hundred, mostly middle class, white people across the United States in order to explore American culture. Their particular focus was on individualism and how many people are moving away from individualism and toward civic participation. Many people are looking for ways to balance their private and public lives. In discussing Thomas Jefferson's views on political participation, Bellah et al. state, "[p]olitical equality can only be effective in a republic where the citizens actually participate" ([1985] 1996:30). Throughout their analyses they advocate for civic participation and detail how people are engaging in broader political contexts. Bellah et al. argue that although American culture has a certain distrust of the federal government, citizens still believe it can work in their favor. They argue it is important for there to be civic participation

and engagement with social movements in order to encourage the government and society to carry on in ways that are more promoting of justice and opportunity than is currently happening.

For over two and a half years through participant observation, Eliasoph (1998) studied how citizens from various civic groups were able to discuss their broad concerns of social and political issues, such as homelessness and environmental pollution, in private, but they had a hard time revealing those concerns in public. She found that these citizens internalized the notion that their views would not be heard by the elite, by those in power, so it was not worth it to voice their concerns (Eliasoph 1998). She suggests for citizens and civic groups to break free of this self-restrained speech. Eliasoph argues, "[t]he more that groups are able to speak in public, the more citizens will expect publicly minded debate in public contexts, and perhaps accept it as a cultural pattern" (1998:258-259). In essence, civic groups should be encouraged to link their concerns for local issues to the national scale. In addition, they should publicly voice these concerns so that in time, our culture will be more open to hearing a broader range of voices beyond those who have money and power.

Building on the foundation set by Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, Putnam (1993) examined democracy in Italy with a focus on regional governments. Central to Putnam's analysis is the concept of social capital. Putnam explains, "[s]ocial capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (1993:167). The concept of social capital is based on building trusting and mutually beneficial relationships with people and other organizations via networking (Putnam 1993). He states, "[v]oluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (Putnam 1993:167). According to Putnam's research, those communities, with a

history of civic groups who have been working together for the community's well-being are more likely to be able to build upon their existing social capital than those who would have to start without significant social capital or those who may start from a position where they are seen negatively. Putnam explains the implications of social capital:

> Stocks of social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks, tend to be self-reinforcing and cumulative. Virtuous circles result in social equilibria with high levels of cooperation, trust, reciprocity, civic engagement, and collective well-being. These traits define the civic community. Conversely, the absence of these traits in the *un*civic community is also self-reinforcing. Defection, distrust, shirking, exploitation, isolation, disorder, and stagnation intensify one another in a suffocating miasma of vicious circles. . . . (P. 177, emphasis in original)

Putnam references Granovetter's (1973) argument that weak ties are more important than strong, interpersonal ties in promoting collective action and maintaining community unity. As Putnam points out, Granovetter (1973) argued that "[w]eak ties are more likely to link members of *different* small groups than are strong ones, which tend to be concentrated within particular groups" (p. 1376, emphasis in original). Similarly, Putnam explains differences between vertical ties and horizontal ties. Vertical ties are seen in hierarchal relationships where power tends to be higher at the top, while power decreases and dependence increases as you move down. In horizontal ties people with "equivalent status and power" are brought together (Putnam 1993:173). Putnam explains, "[a] vertical network, no matter how dense and no matter how important to its participants, cannot sustain social trust and cooperation" (1993:174). For Putnam, different from vertical ties and in comparison to kinship ties which can be strong, horizontal ties cut across different groups. Putnam argues, "networks of civic engagement are more likely to encompass broad segments of society and thus undergird collaboration at the community level" (1993:175). Putnam further explains that "[d]ense but segregated horizontal networks sustain cooperation *within* each group, but networks of civic engagement that cut

across social cleavages nourish wider cooperation. This is another reason why networks of civic engagement are such an important part of a community's stock of social capital" (1993:175, emphasis in original). In addition to networks of civic engagement, norms of reciprocity help to build social trust (Putnam 1993). Citing Marshall Sahlins (1972) and Robert Keohane (1986), Putnam refers to two types of reciprocity: 'balanced' (or 'specific') and 'generalized' (or 'diffuse') (1993:172). Even exchanges are considered balanced reciprocity. Putnam explains, "[g]eneralized reciprocity refers to a continuing relationship of exchange that is at any given time unrequited or imbalanced, but that involves mutual expectations that a benefit granted now should be repaid in the future" (1993:172). Although Putnam's (1993) work was based on activities in Italy, Putnam (1995) continues the argument that building social capital can be a good way to help build a strong civil society and a responsive state.

Polanyi describes the historical relations of economic transactions and social relations involving reciprocity, redistribution, householding, and barter without having a market system. He discusses the rise of and the impacts of the market system on society. Polanyi argues that with the Industrial Revolution the dominant ideology "was utterly materialistic and believed that all human problems could be resolved given an unlimited amount of material commodities" ([1944] 2001:42). Polanyi explains that with the rise of centralized machine production in industrial plants "in a commercial society" that "the idea of a self-regulating market system was bound to take shape" ([1944] 2001:42). For Polanyi, the market pattern used in barter can create its own institution, which is the market, and that this greatly affects society:

> Ultimately, that is why the control of the economic system by the market is of overwhelming consequence to the whole organization of society: it means no less than the running of society as an adjunct to the market. Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system. The vital importance of the economic factor to the existence of society precludes any other result. For once the economic system is organized in separate

> institutions, based on specific motives and conferring a special status, society must be shaped in such a manner as to allow that system to function according to its own laws. This is the meaning of the familiar assertion that a market economy can function only in a market society ([1944] 2001:60).

Polanyi asserts there exists a commodity fiction related to the market system in how land, labor, and money are regarded, because he does not believe labor, land, and money are commodities. He explains that because commodities "are objects produced for sale on the market" while "labor is another name for human activity," land refers to nature, and money is "a token of purchasing power" to see these as commodities is fictitious (Polanyi [1944] 2001:75). Polanyi argues, "[n]ow, in regard to labor, land, and money such a postulate cannot be upheld. To allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment indeed, even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society" ([1944] 2001:77). He discusses how problematic it is psychologically and morally for humans to have their labor activities reduced to being seen as commodities that are bought and sold. Polanyi argues for the importance of non-economic institutions in a market society:

> Robbed of the protective covering of cultural institutions, human beings would perish from the effects of social exposure; they would die as the victims of acute social dislocation through vice, perversion, crime, and starvation. Nature would be reduced to its elements, neighborhoods and landscapes defiled, rivers polluted, military safety jeopardized, the power to produce food and raw materials destroyed. . . Undoubtedly, labor, land, and money markets are essential to a market economy. But no society could stand the effects of such a system of crude fictions even for the shortest stretch of time unless its human and natural substance as well as its business organization was protected against the ravages of this satanic mill ([1944] 2001:77-78).

Polanyi argued a double movement was occurring with, on the one hand, the market system and its ideology of economic liberalism and often its laissez-faire and free trade practices expanding its reach across the globe, and on the other hand a countermovement was aiming to reign in the

destructive potential to humans, nature, and the organization of production by the market system. "[P]rotective legislation, restrictive associations, and other instruments of intervention [were] its [the countermovement's] methods" (Polanyi [1944] 2001:138-139). He also spoke of groups, sections, and classes as being part of the changes that occur in a society through a movement and that it is not just classes that decide the changes. Polanyi asserts, "[a]ctually, class interests offer only a limited explanation of long run movements in society. The fate of classes is more frequently determined by the needs of society than the fate of society is determined by the needs of classes" ([1944] 2001:159). He explains that if a class is struggling it will need to obtain assistance outside of its class. For Polanyi, the issues classes may face cannot be "understood apart from the interests of society, given by its situation as a whole" ([1944] 2001:159).

Drawing on Polanyi (1944) and others, Granovetter (1985) argues there are two extremes in explaining how economic actions are or are not embedded in social relations. The undersocialized view is exemplified by the classical and neoclassical economic view that people engage in "rational, self-interested behavior" that is "affected minimally by social relations" (Granovetter 1985:481). Granovetter (1985) explains the oversocialized view as "the argument of embeddedness" which is "the argument that the behavior and institutions to be analyzed are so constrained by ongoing social relations that to construe them as independent is a grievous misunderstanding" (p. 481-482). He critiques the view that economic transactions were more socially embedded in premarket societies than they are in market societies. Additionally Granovetter critiques the related view that the economy is "an increasingly separate, differentiated sphere in modern society, with economic transactions defined no longer by the social or kinship obligations of those transactions but by rational calculations of individual gain"

(1985:482). He argues that economic actions were less embedded then and also that they are more embedded now than social scientists tend to believe.

Granovetter (1985) uses the context of economic transactions between firms to explain the extent to which he believes that social relations are embedded in economic actions. Granovetter states, "I argue that the anonymous market of neoclassical models is virtually nonexistent in economic life and that transactions of all kinds are rife with the social connections described [transactions within and between firms]" (p. 495). He argues that "[i]n a general way, there is evidence all around us of the extent to which business relations are mixed up with social ones" (Granovetter 1985:495). Granovetter cites William Domhoff (1971) and Michael Useem (1979) and explains "[t]hat business relations spill over into sociability and vice versa, especially among business elites" (1985:495-496). What is different from Polanyi's ([1944] 2001) discussion of embeddedness and Granovetter's is that Polanyi was speaking more broadly about societal structures and the dominant forms of economic transactions in premarket societies and then in the market system within a market society. Granovetter points out that he is not addressing macro-structural concerns. Instead, Granovetter focuses on the particulars of economic transactions within and between businesses and the levels of trust and malfeasance that may occur. He sees the examination of meso-level and micro-level economic transactions and situations as potentially revealing for macro-level analysis. However, just because people may be friendly and trustworthy with the people they are doing business with does not mean that overall those economic transactions are beneficial to, for example, the working class, the poor, or the society in general.

Similar to Bellah et al. ([1985] 1996), Somers (2008) believes a strong civil society is needed to promote the will of the people. For her, civil society, and social movements occurring

in civil society, must be able to thrive while keeping the state and market activity from becoming too strong and overtaking the rights of citizens. Civil society is the place where "people constitute themselves as citizens and as 'a people'" (Somers 2008:32). In line with Polanyi's assertion that the market system needs to be regulated, Somers (2008) emphasizes the delicate balance that should occur between the three spheres of civil society, the state, and the market (i.e., the economy). Contrary to Putnam, Somers asserts that building social capital is not the answer to decreasing poverty and strengthening democratic citizenship. Somers states, "[s]ocial capital is bad for reducing poverty or elevating civic cultures . . . [a]bove all, it is very bad for democratic citizenship" (p. 253). For her, striving to build social capital does not strengthen civil society, rather it makes up for the inefficiencies in the market and encourages people to commodify relationships, thus treating them more as market transactions than social relationships.

Somers argues that the stability that is supposed to occur between the state, the market, and citizens of civil society is significantly out of balance. She discusses that, despite citizenship rights, states and civil societies have fallen victim to market demands and the push to equate everything with monetary values. Somers sees the power of the market increasing to the detriment of citizens with regard to their citizenship rights and their states' abilities to protect them from the increasing disparities caused by market fundamentalism (i.e., neoliberalism). Somers argues that the global society is out of balance and how in the United States, as well as other developed countries, "market fundamentalism – the drive to subject all of social life and the public sphere to market mechanisms – has become the prevailing ideational regime" (2008:2). She emphasizes the need for civic groups to make claims for citizens' rights and to expect the state to have adequate laws and social programs to support citizens and to regulate the

market. For her, creating voluntary groups to express people's wishes is not enough; the people must strive for and maintain their citizenship rights.

In comparison to global capitalism, adding to the civil society, civic communities, and civic engagement discussion Tolbert, Lyson, and Irwin (1998) introduce the concept of local capitalism and provide the ideal image of it:

> Local capitalism is organized around networks of small and medium-size firms. These firms are often linked together in some fashion to form adaptive systems that continually reinforce and support local socioeconomic climates geared toward long-term vitality and enhanced welfare. At the community level, local capitalism is associated with strong local government, a community-oriented educational system, a broad range of social services, including child and health care, locally controlled financial institutions, a participatory church structure, and widespread political involvement of citizens. Local capitalism is unlike global capitalism in that capital and production are anchored to place by social and economic relationships.

Tolbert et al. explain how local capitalism fits in, ". . . the theory of civil society holds that these local institutions [e.g., churches, cafes, and small firms] build local capitalism and increase civic engagement. In doing so, they become buffers for communities that insulate them from global forces" (1998:407). By using county-level data on 3,024 U.S. counties they test the extent to which the greater the presence of local institutions in a county is associated with more civic engagement and higher levels of socio-economic well-being. Tolbert et al. found positive associations in three of four of their models between small manufacturing firms, family farms, and civically engaged religious denominations and greater levels of socio-economic health. Among their results, Tolbert et al. explain:

> . . . our findings indicate that the greatest local good is related to local capitalism. . . . local businesses and associations are embedded in the community while large multinational corporations are not. These small-scale businesses, churches, and associations intertwine local economic growth with local culture and social relationships. This melding of the social economy creates a greater good for a

> greater number of people that offsets gains in economic efficiency achieved by large corporations and businesses (1998:422-423).

Tolbert et al. (2002) model the extent to which the presence of local capitalism and the abundance of civic engagement institutions contribute to civic welfare in U.S. small towns. "The results we report suggest that a civic climate anchored in micro-enterprise entrepreneurship, a proliferation of public meeting establishments, and civic denominations is associated with civic welfare" (Tolbert et al. 2002:111). Tolbert et al. assert, "Tocqueville would hardly be surprised to observe civic community measures performing as they do here in models for small U.S. towns. More than a century after Tocqueville, Mills and Ulmer (1946) again called attention to the robust character of small to mid-size American communities" (2002:111).

Lyson (2004) continues the discussion of civic engagement and civic community. Citing Michael Irwin, Charles Tolbert, and Thomas Lyson (1997), Michael Piore and Charles Sabel (1984), Arnaldo Bagnasco and Charles Sabel (1995), and Benjamin Barber (1995), Lyson (2004) offers a broad conceptualization of civic community:

> At the local level, the civic community is one in which residents are bound to a place by a plethora of local institutions and organizations. Business enterprises are embedded in institutional and organizational networks. And the community, not the corporation, is the source of personal identity, the topic of social discourse, and the foundation for social cohesion. (P. 69)

Lyson discusses civic engagement by community members as an integral component of building and/or rebuilding healthy communities. As Tolbert et al. (1998) and Tolbert et al. (2002) do before him, Lyson cites classic studies by C. Wright Mills and Melville Ulmer (1946) and Walter Goldschmidt (1978) which both found that communities with more small-scale enterprises--manufacturing for Mills and Ulmer and farming for Goldschmidt--had a better quality of life with more economic stability than communities dominated by large-scale businesses and

absentee landlords or corporate headquarters. Lyson explains that in Mills and Ulmer's study they argue that the higher the levels of socio-economic well-being in a city was more likely to occur when there were higher levels of civic engagement and the presence of an economically independent middle class. In addition, this class was said to be more civically engaged and more concerned with the community than what occurred in cities dominated by large-scale businesses (Lyson 2004). At the close of the following discussion of the U.S. agrifood system, I return to Lyson's discussion of civic community. I particularly focus on his application of the civic concepts to the agrifood system which unites in his concept of civic agriculture.

U.S. Agrifood System: Is it Fair?

Since the 1900s in the United States, the agrifood system has continued to change. Lyson (2004) cites three agricultural revolutions as contributing to the industrialization of agriculture in the United States, including the mechanical revolution in the 1900s, the chemical revolution that began after WWII, and the biotechnological revolutions which started in the 1980s. Throughout the 1900s and into the 2000s, while U.S. agriculture was experiencing these changes the broader agrifood system was mirroring them. Winne (2008) recounts the shift in society from sourcing, cooking and consuming predominantly regional and local foods to relying on cheap, mass produced, and convenience foods. A widespread trust in the agrifood system developed among many consumers. However, these changes were resisted by some from small family farmers to counterculturalists who live alternatively to the mainstream and who grow some of their own food. Also, there were concerns that not everyone had access to enough food. Resistance and alternative forms of food production and distribution continue today.

Development of the Post-war Agrifood System

The mechanical revolution began in the 1900s with the introduction of tractors and other machinery (Lyson 2004). The use of farm machinery increasingly allowed farmers to farm more acres with less labor input. Over time, while farm size and incomes increased for some, the number of farms and the number of farmers has decreased. While there were 6.4 million farms in 1910, there were only 3.2 million by 1964 (USDA 1967) and 2.2 million in 2007 (USDA 2009). Over 33 percent of the population lived on farms in the early 1900s, and by 2000, less than 2 percent did (Lobao and Meyer 2001).

During World War I (WWI) export and domestic production of food, including in home, school, and community gardens, was advocated (Lawson 2005). In the Great Depression of the 1930s subsistence gardens and work-relief gardens that provided employment were backed by the federal government (Lawson 2005). Also at this time, in 1932 extreme drought and winds, coupled with the effects of intensive homesteading and commercial agriculture led to dust storms where topsoil was blown off of the lands and crop failures ensued (Ganzel 2003). This experience would come to be called the Dust Bowl. Beginning in 1933, once the New Deal legislation was passed to increase the amount of relief provided due to the Depression and the Dust Bowl, the funding for gardening programs was shifted to the new programs. As part of this legislation the first "Farm Bill," the Agriculture Adjustment Act (AAA) of 1933 was passed. It encouraged and provided subsidies to farmers who reduced the acres they had in production with the goal of keeping surpluses--particularly of wheat, corn, rice, peanuts, milk, cotton, and tobacco--low and prices high (Ganzel 2003). Also in 1933, was the passage of The National Industrial Recovery Act (P.L. 73-67) which in part aimed to decrease soil erosion (USDA-NRCS N.d.). Under the AAA of 1935 domestic consumption of U.S. farmers' surpluses was promoted

(USDA-FNS 2013a). The disastrous effects of the Dust Bowl began to be dealt with more intently on a national level with the passage of the Soil Conservation Act (SCA) in 1935 which created the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) (USDA-NRCS N.d.).

Valocchi (1994) and Domhoff (2010) explain that at this time the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 was passed which provided benefits and protections for workers, but agricultural workers, who a large percentage of were black, were excluded. This put agricultural workers, particularly black agricultural workers, at a disadvantage. As part of the Social Security Act of 1935 the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC)[4] was created, and by 1940 all states were setup to begin providing assistance (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979). It provided support to low-income families with children who were facing hardships, such as unemployment (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979). The program was partially funded by the federal government and the rest of the funding came from state and local governments (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979). To keep their expenditures down, local governments "had a strong incentive to make relief difficult to obtain" (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979:267). Piven and Cloward point out that with the narrow focus on providing aid to low-income families with only one working parent it left many of the poor ineligible for aid.

With the entry of the United States into WWII, programs supporting agricultural production for export and gardening for domestic use were, again, put in place (Lawson 2005). After the war, federal support for the gardening programs was again ended (Lawson 2005). Unemployment in agriculture increased, particularly in the South, and urban unemployment was

[4] In 1996, as part of the revised welfare program, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the AFDC program was merged with the Emergency Assistance (EA) program and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2013).

also problematic (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979). In 1945, the chemical revolution was propelled with the introduction of synthetic chemical pesticides and fertilizers (Lyson 2004). This increased crop yields, with a 75 percent increase between 1950 and 1980 (Lyson 2004). Winne (2008) explains that during the 1950s and 1960s, the trend in American agricultural production was toward industrialization and the trend in food consumption was following right along with society increasing its consumption of mass produced, cheap, and convenience foods. He argues a variety of political-economic factors contributed to those changes, including federal subsidies for wheat production, cheap energy, government and business investment in infrastructure, including for the highway system, railroads, and mills (Winne 2008). The Food Stamp Act of 1964 made the Food Stamp Program (FSP) a permanent program (USDA-FNS 2013a). With this legislation the aim was to not only provide increased nutritional support to low-income households but also to support the broader agricultural economy (USDA-FNS 2013a). Also during the 1960s, not only was the civil rights movement underway, but, in part, due to the difficulties of receiving aid under the AFDC program, there was also a welfare rights movement composed of people in poverty who were demanding relief from their extreme circumstances (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979). In the 1960s and into the early 1970s the numbers of poor people receiving aid increased (Piven and Cloward [1977] 1979).

In the late 1960s and the 1970s in the midst of the civil rights, antiwar, and women's rights movements, agrifood issues began to rise as a broader concern within the environmental movement (Belasco [1989] 2007). There were still ongoing payments to farmers continued under the Farm Bill until the 1970s when the Nixon administration decided to encourage farmers to increase the scale of their farms and grow as much as they could. This was propelled by the Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, and his proclamations to "'plant fence row to fence row'"

and to "'get big or get out'" (Ganzel 2009). Many farmers took this advice and borrowed heavily so they could plant and harvest more acres. Winne explains that during the 1970s and 1980s urban areas were seeing decreases in the number of grocery stores in their locales, there was an increase in hunger, and concerns with environmental degradation and the agrifood system were growing.

In the 1980s, the biotechnology revolution began, and its implications are not yet known (Lyson 2004). However, although facing criticism, recent studies show negative effects of genetically modified organisms on animals. For example, Séralini et al. (2012) conclude from their study on the health impacts of Roundup products on rats that "[t]his study represents the first detailed documentation of long-term deleterious effects arising from the consumption of a GM R-tolerant [genetically modified Roundup tolerant] maize and of R [Roundup], the most used herbicide worldwide" (p. 4230). Over the two year study period, treated rats were more likely to develop tumors, to have pituitary and kidney damage, and female rats were more likely to die (Séralini et al. 2012).

Also, in the 1980s, the Reagan administration made cuts to welfare assistance programs (Poppendieck 1999). With the decreases in aid, there were increases in charity food programs, including soup kitchens and food banks (Poppendieck 1999). Also at this time, many small family farmers found themselves forced out of business due to their increasing debt and their inability to compete with the escalating scale of production. The agricultural industry has been experiencing the concentration of farmland into fewer and larger farms (Key and Roberts 2007). Across the United States from 1982 to 2002, the number of very small farms (0-49 acres) increased by about 17 percent; the quantity of small (50-149 acres) and midsized farms (150-499 and 500-999 acres) decreased by about 17 percent, and large farms (1,000 acres or more)

increased by 14 percent (Key and Roberts 2007). In terms of sales, by 2010, small family farms, those with gross cash farm income (GCFI) of less than $350,000 annually, accounted for 90.9 percent of U.S. farms and 28.6 percent of the value of production, while midsized farms accounted for 5.1 percent of farms and 24.8 percent of the value of production (Hoppe and MacDonald 2013). Large-scale family farms with GCFI of $1 million or more per year and nonfamily farms made up 4.0 percent of the farms and 46.6 percent of the value of production (Hoppe and MacDonald 2013).

Friedland (2010) cites three events in 1989 as the catalysts for increased demand for organic foods and the upsurge in alternative agrifood movements (AAMs) composed of people and groups dissatisfied with the agrifood system. In March, cyanide was found in two grapes in a shipment from Chile, also in March, Alar, considered a carcinogen, was found on apples, and then the Exxon Valdez oil spill occurred dumping over 10 million gallons of oil near Alaska (Friedland 2010). As Friedland discusses, all of these events were widely reported by the media and consumers showed their dismay, for example, by drastically decreasing their consumption of apples in the days after the Alar event and increasing their demand for organic foods. After having grown very slowly before these events, the organic sector began to grow by 20 percent each year following 1989 (Friedland 2010). AAMs and their associated institutions and organizations also began to grow. For example, it is estimated there were 1,755 farmers' markets in 1994, 3,706 in 2004, and 7,864 in 2012 (USDA-AMS 2012). In 1993 there were 400 CSAs (DeMuth 1993), over 1000 CSAs in 2001 (Wilkinson 2001), and 12,549 farms involved in CSAs in 2006 (USDA 2009). In addition, farm-to-school programs grew from a few in the late 1990s, to 400 in 2004, to 1,000 in 2007, and to over 2,000 in 2010 (NFSN N.d.). There are an estimated 18,000 community gardens across the U.S. and Canada (ACGA N.d.). Also, in recent years we

have seen the amount of products labeled organic increase at conventional grocery stores. For example, the USDA reports that "[b]y 2006, approximately equal shares of organic food were sold in the conventional channel, which includes stores such as Safeway and Costco, as in the natural-product stores" (Dimitri and Oberholtzer 2009:6). Retailers have also increased the amount of organic products they offer through their own private labels from "35 in 2003 to 540 in 2007 (Driftmier, 2009)" (Dimitri and Oberholtzer 2009:6).

Agrifood Policies and Programs

Today, funding from the government for agricultural production and food assistance programs continues. Under the farm bill, numerous governmental policies and programs support the agrifood system, from direct payments to some farmers to subsidies for crop insurance and from loans to grants, for example. The main subsidy programs are discussed below. Farm loans include farm ownership loans, farm operating loans, and emergency farm loans (USDA-FSA 2013). There are now increased efforts by the USDA to provide loans to socially disadvantage applicants (SDA), including women, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders, and to beginning farmers (USDA-FSA 2006). These efforts to include more SDAs are in part likely due to past grievances and civil rights lawsuits against the USDA for discrimination of SDAs (see USDA-OASCR N.d.). A few of the grant programs administered by the USDA include the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for those producing fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops; the Organic Cost Share Program to assist those applying for organic certification; the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program which provides grants for research involving sustainable agriculture; and the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program (BFRDP) which assists the development of new farmers and ranchers.

In addition, food assistance programs, including SNAP, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), School Food Programs (i.e., cash payments for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast, Special Milk, and commodity payments), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) offer aid to low-income individuals and families who qualify. Approximately 42 percent of the participants of the four largest USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs, including SNAP, WIC, free or reduced-price school breakfast, and free or reduced-price school lunch, receive benefits from only one of the programs (USDA-FNS 2012a).

With the passage of the 2008 farm bill, the food stamp program was renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in an effort to reduce the stigma of participation in the program (USDA-FNS 2013b). WIC is a federal grant program that provides assistance to nutritionally at risk, low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women; infants; and children up to the age of five (USDA-FNS 2013c). The first year the program offered aid was in 1974, and there were 88,000 recipients; by 2000, there were 7.2 million recipients; and in fiscal year 2011 there were approximately 8.9 million recipients each month, including 2.1 million women, 2.1 million infants, and 4.7 million children (USDA-FNS 2013c).

The National School Lunch Act was passed in 1946 and around 7.1 million children participated in the first year, by 1990 more than 24 million children were involved, and by fiscal year 2011 over 31.8 million participated (USDA-FNS 2012b). Under the program children from low-income families who meet eligibility requirements can receive reduced or free school meals instead of paying the full price the schools charge. The aid is provided to schools in the form of cash and USDA commodity foods are also distributed to schools that order them (USDA-FNS 2012b). TEFAP began in 1981 with the aim to provide governmental surpluses of food to low-

income people, including the elderly (USDA-FNS 2013d). Nutrition assistance is also provided (USDA-FNS 2013d). The USDA purchases the food, sends it to the states who give it to local agencies, which are often food banks, who then distribute the food to soup kitchens and food pantries where it is provide to people in need (USDA-FNS 2013d). In 2011, not including additional surplus food from the USDA, nearly $300 million was allocated for food and administrative costs for TEFAP (USDA-FNS 2013d).

As of May 2013, we are currently operating under the 2008 farm bill, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), because Congress failed to pass a new bill in 2012. Instead they passed an extension of the bill that will expire in September of 2013, so the House and the Senate are both working on their versions of the bill. Johnson and Monke (2012) point out that "[t]he overwhelming share (97%) of estimated total net outlays for programs in the 2008 farm bill was anticipated to be spent on four titles: nutrition, farm commodity support, crop insurance, and conservation" (p. 3). Over five years, of the $284 billion projected to be spent through the farm bill approximately 67 percent ($189 billion) was to be spent on SNAP and other nutrition programs, about 15 percent ($42 billion) for farm commodity support, approximately 8 percent ($22 billion) for crop insurance, 9 percent ($24 billion) for conservation programs, and an additional $10 billion for the other programs, such as horticulture and livestock production and research (Johnson and Monke 2012).

Agricultural Assistance

According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG), from 1995 to 2012, $292.5 billion in farm subsidies were distributed to and for farmers, with $177.6 billion for commodity programs, $53.6 billion for crop insurance, $38.9 billion for conservation programs, and $22.5 billion in disaster payments. Estimates by the EWG (2013) show the top 5 commodities or

programs were the following for 1995 to 2012: (1) corn subsidies, $84.4 billion, (2) wheat subsidies, $35.5 billion, (3) cotton subsidies, $32.9 billion, (4) Conservation Reserve Program payments, $31.5 billion, and (5) soybean subsidies, $27.8 billion. From 1995-2012, of the farmers that did receive subsidies, 10 percent received 75 percent of the total amount and collected an average of $32,000 annually (EWG 2013). The average annual subsidy for the bottom 80 percent of recipients was $604 (EWG 2013). From 1995 to 2012, while Kansas ranked 6th out of 50 states in subsidies received at $16.4 billion, Missouri ranked 12th at $10.2 billion received. The top 10 percent and the bottom 80 percent in each state received comparable amounts to the national averages. In 2007, not including crop insurance, $8 billion in governmental agricultural program payments went to 838,391 farms, which is 38 percent of the farms, and the average payment was $9,500 per year (USDA 2009).

Table 2.1 Top 5 Commodities 2011, U.S., KS, and MO

Rank Number and Percent Cash Receipts			
Commodity	**U.S.**	**Kansas**	**Missouri**
Corn	#1, 17	#2, 16	#2, 20
Cattle & Calves	#2, 17	#1, 48	#3, 17
Dairy products	#3, 11	-----, -----	-----, -----
Soybeans	#4, 8.0	#4, 8	#1, 25
Broilers	#5, 6.0	-----, -----	-----, -----
Wheat	-----, 4.0	#3, 12	-----, -----
Sorghum	-----, 0.3	#5, 4	-----, -----
Hogs	-----, 6.0	-----, -----	#4, 10
Turkeys	-----, 1.0	-----, -----	#5, 4
Fruits, Vegetables, & Nuts	-----, 12	-----, 0.3	-----, 0.9

Source: USDA-ERS. 2013a. "Historical and State-Level Data—U.S. Farm Income and Wealth Statistics."
(http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/farm-income-and-wealth-statistics. aspx#27415)

In Table 2.1 (above) the top 5 commodities produced in 2011 in the United States, Kansas, and Missouri are shown. Corn is the top national commodity along with cattle and calf production, and corn producers receive the highest amount of program subsidies. Corn and cattle

and calves are also highly valuable to Kansas and Missouri. Fruits, vegetables, and nuts account for 12 percent of the nation's cash receipts, but they account for less than 1 percent of cash receipts in both Kansas and Missouri. As mentioned, corn, soybeans, and wheat were three of the top five commodities or programs that received subsides from 1995 to 2012.

The EWG subdivides the total USDA farm subsidies into four categories and provides payout information on each of the programs: (1) conservation subsidies, (2) disaster subsidies, (3) commodity subsidies, and (4) crop insurance premium subsidies. These subsides are shown in Table 2.2 (below) for 2011 and 2012. Commodity subsidies include direct payments, counter cyclical payments, and twenty-one other programs. In 2011, the top 20 recipients, which is less than 0.5 percent, of commodity subsidies received more than $435,000 each of the $5 billion in payments disbursed (EWG 2013). The top 2,024 recipients, which is 0.21 percent, of the 971,739 recipients received over $100,000 each (EWG 2013). Federal payments were distributed through eleven conservation programs, seven disaster programs, and the crop insurance program.

Table 2.2 USDA Farm Subsidies, 2011-2012

Year	Conservation Subsidies	Disaster Subsidies	Commodity Subsidies	Crop Insurance Premium Subsidies	**Total USDA Subsidies**
	Payments / *Recipients*	Payments / *Recipients*	Payments / *Recipients*	Subsidies / *Policies*	Payments / *Recipients*
2011	$1,925,165,431 *446,463*	$1,215,287,760 *143,662*	$5,036,792,545 *971,739*	$7,459,526,601 *2,067,144*	**$15,651,591,041** ***1,243,212***
2012	$1,804,467,669 *427,021*	$795,259,247 *58,451*	$5,325,744,921 *947,665*	$6,950,022,492 *2,106,506*	**$14,875,494,329** ***1,194,844***

Source: Environmental Working Group (2013) "EWG Farm Subsidies." (http://farm.ewg.org/regionsummary.php?fips=00000&statename=theUnitedStates)

Crop insurance policies are obtainable for more than one hundred commodities, but only four crops, including corn, soybeans, wheat, and cotton account for nearly 80 percent of the crops covered (World Bank 2005). Over 80 percent of eligible crop acres are covered by

insurance (Babcock 2010). In 2011, crop insurance subsides totaling $1 million were provided to 26 farm businesses toward their costs to purchase insurance (EWG 2013). In addition, in 2011, 54 percent of the total crop insurance subsides were given to 10 percent of the farm businesses (EWG 2013). Governmental subsides cover almost 60 percent of farmers' costs for crop insurance (Babcock 2010).

Food Assistance

From the USDA's data, I estimate that for 1995 to 2012, $606.2 billion was disbursed for SNAP. In 2008, $35 billion was provided through SNAP to 12.7 million households, with an average payment of $2,719 per household for the year (USDA-FNS 2013b). In 2012, $75-80 billion in aid through SNAP was provided to 22 million households, with an average payment of $3,342 per year (USDA-FNS 2013b). In addition, in 2012, $6.8 billion was spent on the WIC program; for the School Food Programs, $13.7 billion went toward cash payments, and an additional $1.2 billion was paid toward commodity costs of the program; and $308 million was set aside for the TEFAP program (USDA-FNS 2013b).

Critiques of the Agrifood System and Policies

Environmental, social, and economic concerns with the agrifood system are increasingly expressed (Allen 2004). From a variety of angles, critics question the extent to which there is fairness in the system. Focusing on social and economic concerns, according to critics, U.S. agricultural policies and economic incentives have long supported large-scale agribusinesses and commodity production of crops, including corn, soybeans, and wheat, while there has been less support for fruits and vegetables. Those who benefit the most from governmental subsidy programs are large-scale farmers and not small-scale farmers (Domhoff 2010). Critics argue that

while agribusinesses and large-scale farmers receive support, there are people who struggle to meet their food needs. Critics question what the relationship should be between civil society and the agrifood system and how food insecurity can be decreased (Allen 1999; Poppendieck 1999).

There are other concerns with the system that assert or expose unfair practices, while they deserve mentioning, they are not the focus of this piece. For example, what this system is and what it externalizes is often taken for granted. For some, the system is epitomized by large-scale food production where monocultures are predominant and inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, are high and costly. Workers' wages are typically low considering the rough working conditions they often face. Migrant farm workers are often exploited. For many crops, such as tomatoes, some argue that quality has been sacrificed for the durability of travel. Once grown, food typically travels long distances, passing through many hands, and it often crosses international borders. These long distances increase the time it takes for food to get from the ground, to the markets, and then to consumers, arguably decreasing the freshness and the nutritional qualities of the foods. Negative environmental impacts also occur, for example, due to the fuel used during production and transportation. Reliance on fossil fuel energy is also voiced as being problematic. Other concerns include chemical contamination of foods and the environment due to agricultural inputs such as pesticides and herbicides, and the possible health implications of the system such as is seen in the existence of hunger and the simultaneous proliferation of diabetes and obesity (Guthman 2011). Debates are occurring over the safety or lack of safety of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Wright and Middendorf 2008). More broadly, food safety and animal welfare concerns are also expressed.

Critiques of Agricultural Production Policies

Some argue the food system is dominated by corporations (Magdoff et al. 2000; Lyson 2004). Lyson asserts, "[f]rom the biotechnology laboratories to the dinner table, large multinational corporations are taking control of where, when, and how food is produced, processed, and distributed" (2004:48). Heffernan (2000) details the high percentages (from 35 to 87 percent) of commodity processing that the four largest processors in nine different sectors from beef to sheep and from flour milling to soybean crushing have (p. 65). In addition, "[f]orty percent or more of the processing of all agricultural commodities in the Midwest are controlled by the four largest firms" (Heffernan 2000:65). Concentration is also occurring in retail (Heffernan 2000). Agricultural commodities and food prices are subject to global market fluctuations in food and fuel prices which is precarious for farmers and consumers. Lyson (2004) states, "[f]or farmers in the United States and elsewhere, the globalization of production means that the markets for their products have become very unstable" (p. 60).

Governmental subsidies are not helping mid-size farmers as much as they are large-scale farmers (EWG 2013). While small-scale farmers are increasingly able to sell their products via direct marketing to consumers and large-scale farmers are able to sell their commodities on the global market, mid-size farmers are struggling to maintain in this dual structure (Kirschenmann et al. 2008). Kirschenmann et al. (2008) view these mid-size farmers as independent family farmers who provide benefits to the land they steward and to their communities. They would like to see independent family farms able to continue in agriculture and not just have lifestyle farms where the occupants have their primary occupation as a non-farm occupation on the one hand and large-scale corporate farms on the other that specialize in monocrop production of commodities. Similarly, in their farm bill platform, the EWG argues, "[m]any farmers are

producing food in ways that protect family farms and the environment, but government policies are doing too little to reward good stewardship and too much to underwrite unsustainable crop and animal production by the largest and most successful farm businesses" (2013). The EWG explains, "[t]o protect America's families, farmers and natural heritage, Congress must enact a farm bill that fully funds conservation programs, reforms subsidies to protect family farmers and supports a transition to practices that reduce the need for antibiotics, toxic pesticides and hormones" (EWG 2013).

The federally subsidized crop insurance program, which is part of the farm bill, is also criticized. The program includes both crop yield and crop revenue insurance, and it is available across the United States for select crops (Harwood et al. 1999). Research suggests that farmers may be using crop insurance to mitigate risk and loss from climate change[5] (Mendelsohn 2006; Antle 2010). From 2001 to 2007, over $22 billion of taxpayer dollars have gone toward the crop insurance program (Babcock 2010). Roughly $11 billion was received by farmers and the other half was spent getting the payments to the farmers via, for example, administrative and operating costs and underwriting charges (Babcock 2010). Therefore, "making crop insurance one of the least efficient means of taxpayer support for the farm sector" (Babcock 2010:295). Further, he explains that crop insurance agents work on commission so they have incentives to sell as much coverage as they can and companies have incentives to compete for the agents' business. Babcock (2010) argues, "[b]ecause taxpayer subsidies are the only source of revenue for

[5] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2007) states climate change "refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity" (p. 2). According to the IPCC, "[g]lobal atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750," and these levels are beyond natural variations that have occurred through time (2007:2). Fossil fuel use is cited as the primary source for the increased carbon dioxide levels, and agriculture is considered the main contributor to the levels of methane and nitrous oxide going to the atmosphere (IPCC 2007:2). As recorded for 2001 to 2005, the total global surface temperature has increased 0.76 degrees Celsius since the period from 1850 to 1899 (IPCC 2007:5).

companies or agents, any lobbying that they do uses taxpayer funds," and they lobby to support their interests (p. 303).

Critiques of Food Assistance Policies

In the U.S. we have the quantity of food people need, but not everyone has access to it. Food security is the ability to have "consistent access to enough food for active, healthy lives for all household members at all times during the year" (Nord, Andrews, and Carlson 2009:iii). Those unable to meet these food needs are considered food insecure (Nord et al. 2009). Research has shown relationships to each of the following household characteristics and food insecurity: low family income, female-headed households with children, non-white households with children, and black and Hispanic households (Mammen, Bauer, and Richards 2008; Nord et al. 2009). Mammen et al. (2008) cite insufficient income as a "major reason why families experience food insecurity" (p. 153). DeNavas-Walt et al. (2008) point out that in 2007, black households and Hispanic households had median incomes that were only 62 and 70 percent of non-Hispanic white households' incomes (p. 6). Bartfeld et al. (2006) also discuss low educational attainment and the lack of working adults in the household as increasing the likelihood of households being food insecure.

In 2011, 14.9 percent of U.S. households (17.9 million) were considered food insecure for some part of the year, and 5.7 percent of those households (6.8 million) were said to have very low food security (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). When very low food security occurs this means that some members of the household have experienced decreased consumption of food compared to their normal eating patterns (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). In 2010, 14.5 percent of households were food insecure compared to 14.7 percent in 2009, 14.6 percent in 2008, and 11.1 percent in 2007 (Nord et al. 2010). The increase from 2007 may be attributable to the recent

economic recession. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) (2010) the recession began in December of 2007, and it ended in June of 2009. The NBER states the ending of the recession does not mean economic conditions became positive across the board, rather it means recovery began.

In 2011, adults and children in 10.0 percent of households with children (3.9 million) experienced food insecurity, and it was highest in female-headed households at 18.9 percent (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). The percent of food insecure households of those with elderly persons was 8.4 percent (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). Also in 2011, compared to the 11.4 percent of non-Hispanic white households considered food insecure, 25.1 percent of black households and 26.2 percent of Hispanic households were food insecure (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). In addition, Coleman-Jensen et al. explain, "[t]he typical food-secure household spent 24 percent more for food than the typical food-insecure household of the same size and composition" (2012:vi).

Table 2.3 U.S. Food Insecurity, 2009-2011

Locale	Percent Household Food Insecurity Averages (2009-2011)	Percent Households Very Low Food Security[+] Averages (2009-2011)
Kansas	14.5	5.2
Wyandotte County, KS	20.3 (2010)[++]	N/A
Missouri	16.0	6.7
Jackson County, MO	19.1 (2010)[++]	N/A
United States	14.7	5.6

[+]This accounts for part of the food insecurity total.
Sources: Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012. "Household Food Security in the United States in 2011." (http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884525/err141.pdf)
[++]Feeding America 2012. "Map the Meal Gap." (http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx).

Table 2.3 (above) shows that on average from 2009 to 2011, 14.7 percent of U.S. households were considered food insecure and 5.6 percent of those households experienced very

low food security. Kansas City and particularly the urban core that is encompassed by Wyandotte County, Kansas and Jackson County, Missouri is the focus here, so statewide and county characteristics of food insecurity are shown in the table. The statewide household food insecurity averages for Kansas and Missouri are similar to the national average. However, the percent of households experiencing food insecurity is higher in Wyandotte County at 20.3 percent and Jackson County at 19.1 percent.

As mentioned, some households receive aid from Federal food assistance programs and/or from non-profit and private community food programs (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). In November of 2011 it is estimated that 57 percent of households experiencing food insecurity received assistance from either SNAP, WIC, and/or the National School Lunch Program (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). Additionally, in 2009, 4.8 percent of households received food from a food pantry (Nord et al. 2010), which was an increase over the 3.4 percent who received this aid in 2007 (Nord et al. 2009).

Food assistance programs exist to provide access to food to those in need, which often fill in where governmental food aid programs (e.g., SNAP, WIC, and TEFAP) have been reduced (Poppendieck 2000). McMahon (2011) argues, "[a]gri-food governance used to be primarily a nation state function. Now it is more diffuse and socially and spatially extended. It is often performed by non-state actors and institutions, often corporate actors but not uncommonly citizens' organizations" (p. 407). Poppendieck (2000) conducted a "study of charitable food programs—so called 'emergency food' in the United States" (p. 189). She explains, "[i]n the years since the early 1980s, literally millions of Americans have been drawn into such projects: soup kitchens and food pantries on the front lines, and canned good drives, food banks, and 'food rescue' projects that supply them" (Poppendieck 2000:189).

Poppendieck (2000) details the breadth of the food programs, "[t]here are fourteen separate federal food assistance programs, numerous state and local programs, and thousands upon thousands of local, private charitable feeding projects which elicit millions of hours of volunteer time as well as enormous quantities of donated funds and food" (p. 191). The proliferation of non-profit and private charity food programs is detracting from the structural changes that are needed to reduce inequalities and create a society that provides adequate food and resources for all of its citizens (Poppendieck 1999). Poppendieck (1994) explains that many argue that food assistance should be something to cushion those who have come upon hard times, but it should not be the main resource to carry people through their lives. Some question if food assistance organizations are doing the job of the state. Speaking from a social justice perspective and assessing the weaknesses of the emergency food system, Poppendieck argues, "[t]he key concern is that food projects should not be permitted to substitute for reliable, public, 'permanent' cash assistance or food assistance entitlements" as this would undercut the state's responsibilities to keep inequalities in check (1994:74).

Alternative Agrifood Activities

More people and groups in civil society are acting on their concerns with the dominant agrifood system (Poppendieck 1999; Allen 2004; Hinrichs and Barham 2008). Various actions and activities are addressing social, economic, and environmental concerns (Allen 2004). In terms of addressing social inequalities and promoting fairness in the system, in addition to the food assistance programs and the food banks, as mentioned, there are also alternative food institutions, such as farmers' markets and CSAs that offer alternative ways to get food to people; there are schools, non-profit organizations, and food policy councils that aim to reduce inequalities through their programs and advocacy efforts; and there are home, school,

educational, and community gardens where people can learn about nutrition and food production while also growing some of their own food. As mentioned, Lyson refers to these activities that are working to have agricultural and food practices more embedded in social relations that promote community sustainability and a more just agrifood system as civic agriculture. In various U.S. cities urban agricultural activities are underway and some people, whether consciously or not are promoting civic agriculture, food justice, and therefore a fairer agrifood system.

Hendrickson (2009) states, "[t]he most important strength that alternative food systems have is the ability to connect producers and consumers in personalized, authentic ways that expand beyond a market relationship" (p. 175). Also, compared to large agrifood businesses the organizations involved in alternative food systems tend to be small and flexible which means they possibly have an advantage in that they can be responsive and flexible to changes in tastes and cultural trends (Hendrickson 2009). Another possible strength of alternative food movements is their potential ability to continue to shape the discourse around alternative food or good food (Allen 2004; Hendrickson 2009). Allen (2004) discusses the importance attributed to discourse for social movements: "For many analysts, the primary power of social movements is discursive, that is, it lies substantially in their ability to challenge dominant perspectives and priorities by raising new issues, changing popular consciousness, and opening new arenas of public policy" (p. 6). She continues to explain that many analysts believe the ability of social movements to use discourse to frame their issues is vital, especially for those who do not have a lot of economic or political power.

Not only are framing and discourse important, but so is knowledge. Allen mentions the linkages between knowledge and power. She states, "[t]hose who possess knowledge are better

able to exercise power in ways that are more likely to bring about the changes they desire" (Allen 2004:163). Bell (2004) mentions Michel Foucault's vast work on power/knowledge, and he states, "[h]e was two-thirds right" (p. 143). By this Bell means the inclusion of identity along with power/knowledge brings agency into the mix (i.e., power/knowledge/identity). Bell explains, "[t]o speak of knowledge is to speak of identity, and vice versa. But to speak of identity is also to speak of power, and vice versa. And to speak of power is to speak of knowledge, and vice versa. It's circles within circles" and they are of the same importance (2004:143). The three aspects are interrelated. What we know shapes how we see ourselves and how others see us. While power relations also shape and are shaped by what we know, who we know, and how we self identify and how we are identified.

As mentioned, not all people who would like to obtain organic, fresh fruits and vegetables can do so, because they do not have the means, the knowhow, and/or the options close by. Various programs are in place to assist people with increasing their access to foods and providing nutrition education. Through their programming some agrifood organizations and activities focus on social aspects while others focus on economic or environmental concerns, and still others try to address all of these matters simultaneously (e.g., food justice activists). For example, some organizations such as food banks, may feel it is more important for there to be access to any type of food regardless of whether it was grown locally and/or sustainably. Others are more concerned that food is labeled organic and they are not concerned about where and how it was grown or whether or not items are affordable to others. There are those who are concerned with production practices that are considered more sustainable in that they use less to no synthetic chemical inputs and more natural processes than conventional agriculture. While critiquing these sustainable agriculture movements (SAMs) for being too focused on food

production issues and not concerned enough with social relationships, Goodman (2000) argues, "[b]y default, issues of equity, access, and social justice in agro-food networks increasingly have been taken up by community food security movements and urban anti-hunger activists" (p. 217). For these movements Goodman (2000) asserts that (SAMs) "have singularly failed to articulate coherent strategies to address issues of equity, food security, class, gender, and race in agro-food networks" (p. 217). This is where civic agriculture, social justice focused urban agriculture, and food justice activism comes in. In particular, civic agriculture, social justice focused urban agriculture and, more specifically, food justice activists aim to address these issues holistically as they strive for justice in the agrifood system. I return to these issues momentarily.

The movements are experiencing that some in the government, the media, and the general public are open to and supportive of their causes. The movements have been finding the Obama administration, to not only be more sympathetic to its causes than previous administrations, but also to be supporting it in many ways with its own efforts. For example, in February of 2009, the new Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, planted a "people's garden" near the department's headquarters to show support for local food production and consumption and to demonstrate the department's new willingness to promote such activities (Martin 2009). Then a long-time sustainable food activist and professor, Kathleen Merrigan, was appointed Deputy Secretary to Tom Vilsack (Martin 2009), although she resigned in March of 2013.

In addition, Michelle Obama, the First Lady, has been a promoter of the benefits of eating healthy, locally produced food (Martin 2009) and of sharing these foods with underprivileged people. Since the spring of 2009, she and numerous groups of local school children have planted and harvested a vegetable garden on the White House lawn. The produce has been used to feed the President's family, guests, school children, and underprivileged people. Michelle Obama's

"Let's Move" campaign is increasingly popular. It promotes healthy, active lifestyles for children with the aim of reducing childhood obesity and other related health problems such as diabetes and high blood pressure. In general, the media is framing or portraying the movements in a positive light. In addition, a journalist and author, Michael Pollan, is considered by some to be the "food movement's idea guy and de facto leader" although he does not see himself this way; rather he frames himself as a journalist sharing his concerns with his readers (Steven T. Jones 2009: para. 2). So far, four of his agriculture and food related books have been on the New York Times bestsellers lists.

AAMs are supported by a variety of organizations across the country and these types of movements exist in locales across the world. For example, La Via Campesina is an international movement which brings together landless peasants, indigenous communities, agricultural workers, farm families, and others to call on the world's governments to promote diversity, autonomy, identity, rights for people, and food sovereignty. "Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (La Via Campesina 2011). The concerns of people and communities come first instead of answering to the "demands of markets and corporations" (La Via Campesina 2011).

On a smaller scale and more locale specific are local food movements. The concept of local food systems (Feenstra 1997; Selfa and Qazi 2005; and Winne 2008) is a contested concept, yet it is an encompassing way to conceptualize activities occurring in urban food environments promoting social, economic, and food justice. Allen and Wilson (2008) argue, "[t]he construction and endowments of localities must be placed in historical context, beginning with the understanding that many localities have been enriched -- and thus have won the

privilege of expending effort to relocalize -- through the impoverishment of others" (p. 537). Winne (2008) discusses local food systems as being composed of "community gardens, farmers' markets, food co-ops, community supported agriculture (CSA) farms, food banks, food policy councils, new supermarkets, nutrition education programs, community canneries, solar greenhouses, new government-funded food and farm initiatives, and farmland preservation groups" (p. 13). In addition, while examining alternative food networks (AFNs) in rural counties in Washington, Selfa and Qazi (2005) discuss provisioning processes occurring that have not typically been identified as activities within local AFNs, including direct purchasing from processors and packinghouses at reduced prices, subsistence production, donations, bartering, and gleaning, where a gleaning group is "a self-organized group that goes into fields after harvest and into processing and packing sheds to cull surplus food," (p. 461).

Demographics of Agrifood Participants

While those more likely to be food insecure are black and Hispanic households, are alternative agrifood movements and urban agriculture initiatives in particular dominated by the participation of affluent whites? Slocum (2007) contends that consumers participating in alternative food activities are mostly white and middle class. Guthman (2008) also discusses the prevalence of whites and wealth in alternative food institutions (AFIs). She explains many of her undergraduate students' projects, such as food security initiatives in inner cities, "reflect white desires and missionary practices, which might explain [the] lack of resonance" with the targeted African American populations (Guthman 2008:433). Guthman does not "suggest an essential white or black desire" to participate in these activities, as "[s]ome African Americans are clearly drawn to alternative food practice just as many whites are seemingly turned off by it" (2008:434-435). Her examples appear to examine mostly black teenagers and their lack of interest in

growing and consuming fresh vegetables. Would the results differ based on different age groups, races/ethnicities, or locales? Similar to Guthman's (2008) argument, Alkon (2008) found that the West Oakland market in the San Francisco Bay area, which is populated by African American vendors, "has been largely unsuccessful" in its attempts to get low-income, [b]lack neighborhood residents to participate (p. 490).

Guthman explains, "[w]ith some exceptions, farmers' markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) tend to locate or distribute to areas of relative wealth" (2008:431). In addition, most farm-to-school programs are "developing in relatively white, affluent school districts"—although there are exceptions (Guthman 2008:431). Alkon's (2008) work with two farmers' markets provides a more diverse picture. She found that the entirely organic, North Berkeley farmers' market was composed of 78 percent white customers with almost one-third of the customers earning over $100,000 annually (Alkon 2008). While the West Oakland farmers' market's customers are "primarily middle-class blacks hailing from wealthier parts of the San Francisco Bay Area" along with young, highly educated whites who live in the locale (Alkon 2008). Hinrichs (2003) found those most likely to participate in Iowa-grown banquet meals are upper-middle, educated classes. Similarly, a USDA marketing report which cites eight studies concludes, "[n]early all studies find that consumers with higher levels of education were the most willing or most likely to purchase organic products" (Dimitri and Oberholtzer 2009:3).

Johnston (2008) cautions characterizing all alternative food activities as dominated by the privileged. For example, citing Harvey Levenstein (1993), Stephen Mennell (1986) and Pierre Bourdieu (1984), Johnston (2008) states, "[f]ood is clearly a marker of social class and a form of cultural capital that elites use to consolidate and reproduce social inequality" (p. 94). However, Johnston goes on to argue that, "food is more than a simple instrument of class oppression. Food

also represents an entry point for political engagement, making it problematic to single-handedly categorize all interest in food as bourgeois piggery" (2008:94). She explains that while there are alternative food activities that "are profit-oriented, other projects contain explicit anti-capitalist agendas and purposely set out to define food as a fundamental human right--not a mere commodity" (Johnston 2008:94).

Is there "a gendered dimension to alternative food practice" as Slocum (2007:529) contends? Delind and Ferguson (1999) express that in CSAs "[w]omen, it now appears, constitute a majority of the active membership" (p. 190). Similarly, Bell (2004) argues that with the rise of CSAs, women's involvement in farm operations and organizational membership has increased. Trauger (2004) states "[w]omen throughout the West are up to three times more likely to be the operator of a farm in sustainable agricultural models than in productivist models" (p. 289). It may be the case that women are more involved in alternative agricultures than conventional commodity agriculture.

Civic Agriculture, Urban Agriculture, and Food Justice

Lyson (2004) explains his view of the changes occurring in the United States' agrifood system. On the one hand, the dominant mode of agricultural production, processing, and retailing is increasingly dominated by large corporations. Along with this mass production process is mass consumption by consumers (Winne 2008). On the other hand, Lyson describes a countertrend which is characterized by a relocalization of agricultural production and consumption. As mentioned, this is occurring across the country in various locales. Lyson (2004) states, "[t]he term 'civic agriculture' references the emergence and growth of community-based agriculture and food production activities that not only meet consumer demands for fresh, safe, and locally produced foods but create jobs, encourage entrepreneurship, and strengthen community identity"

(p. 2). He uses the term civic agriculture "because these activities are tightly linked to a community's social and economic development" (Lyson 2004:1). Lyson discusses civic engagement by community members as an essential element in building or rebuilding healthy communities.

Morton et al. (2005) examined food insecurity in two high poverty rural Iowa food deserts. Food deserts are generally referred to as areas that lack grocery stores that offer fresh foods (e.g., fruits and vegetables) that are accessible to the poor (Laurance 1998; Cummins and Macintyre 2002). In Morton et al.'s (2005) analysis they went beyond viewing food insecurity as an individual problem for individual households. Instead they also examined the social organization of the rural areas by measuring not only people's personal connections in giving and receiving food, but also their perceptions of the civic structure associated with addressing food issues in the community. Morton et al. explain their civic structure index "measures the extent to which respondents perceive that local institutions and leaders are working to solve food problems in the community" (2005:104). They found that younger people and those who earned lower incomes were more likely to be food insecure, that "perceptions of high civic structure decrease the odds of being food insecure," and "[g]iving to or receiving food from family and friends does not decrease the odds of being food insecure" (Morton et al. 2005:107). Morton et al. explain their logistic regression results suggest that having numerous groups and organizations working from a variety of angles to address food insecurity in rural areas is important. For future research, they suggest using the civic agriculture groups (e.g., CSAs, farmer's markets, and buy local initiatives) that Lyson identifies as measures of civic structure. Morton et al. (2005) conclude:

> Strong civic structure can offer more than food safety net assistance. The loss of a local grocery store or the inadequate quality and variety of fresh foods in an

> existing store are problems for the whole community, not just those with resource limitations. Community groups are sources of mobilization to encourage local shopping, to increase the quality of foods available, to create farmer markets, to support existing or recruit new grocery stores, and to develop better transportation systems and livable wage employment. (P. 110)

Community groups can help strengthen the community's civic structure to decrease food insecurity and increase fairness in the locale's agrifood system.

As is the case with many who write of alternative agrifood movements, Lyson draws on the work of Karl Polanyi (1944) and his concept of embeddedness. Lyson (2004) states, "Polanyi offers a perspective in which the 'economy' is seen as a mechanism to meet the material needs of a society through a process of interaction between humans and their environment" (p. 72) instead of the economy being a separate sphere in which people primarily engage in competition and impersonal transactions. For Lyson, the goal of civic agriculture is to have agriculture and food production embedded in local communities. Lyson discusses how involvement with civic agricultural activities can encourage people to become more involved in agriculture and food activities and programs and to participate in the advocacy for beneficial agrifood programs and policies. He argues engagement in these activities can do several things. First of all, they can increase agricultural literacy, which is knowledge of food production. Secondly, it can expand the problem solving capacity of communities, which are the abilities of community members to work together on issues they face or that may arise. Thirdly, it can increase local economic multiplier effects, which occurs when purchasing from locally owned businesses helps more money to circulate in the local economy, in part, because the owners live locally and are said to spend more of their money locally as well. According to Lyson, there may be more room for transformative agency in civic agriculture than in industrial agriculture.

Similarly, while discussing the need for conscious consumerism, community food security programs, and political advocacy to attain fairness in the agrifood system, Allen (1999) argues:

> Participation in everyday forms of resistance, like choosing foods grown without pesticides or refusing to buy eggs produced by hens raised in battery cages seem small, but can have significant effects. . . . Green consumption, for example, certainly has its limits, but the thought process can have a big effect on one's consciousness and that of the people around them. . . . In addition to consumption choices, other small acts can affect consciousness about the food system. Participating in a community garden or helping out at a food bank, for example, will unavoidably change some tiny part of how one sees the dynamics of the food system, and perhaps beyond it. (P. 127)

As Allen (1999) is implying, engaging in these alternative agricultures beyond simple unconscious production and consumption and instead consciously thinking about how these activities relate to the dominant agrifood system can impact how one sees the system. She argues that drawing on the positive qualities of food assistance programs and community food security projects (e.g., community gardens) can help "to overcome the forces that have produced food insecurity. Together these approaches can mend the tattered strands of the remaining safety net against hunger" (Allen 1999:127).

In a similar vein, yet not in total agreement with Allen's points, DeLind (2002) argues that production and consumption cannot be considered the same thing as citizenship. DeLind states, "[a] good producer, a good product, a good consumer is not at all the same thing as a good citizen. The making of commodities and their consumption (however infinite the opportunities) are simply not enough; they are not of themselves civic activities" (p. 218). She stated this in the context of critiquing Lyson's (2000) early work of conceptualizing civic agriculture as focusing "on creating economic infrastructure rather than common inner structure" (DeLind 2002:222). After citing Lyson (2000), DeLind expresses that she supports the concept and potential of civic

agriculture. She states, "[civic agriculture] CA moves away from a strictly mechanistic focus on production and economic efficiency and toward food and farming systems responsive to particular ecological and socioeconomic contexts. The emphasis on agriculture as a civic, as opposed to a purely economic issue, is a liberating departure from the rational prison of neoclassical thought" (DeLind 2002:217). However, for Delind (2002) civic agriculture needs to broaden its focus from economic concerns to more sociocultural ones as well.

Lyson (2000) argues communities supporting local systems of agriculture and food production and marketing as part of a broad economic development plan can have better control over their economic futures. Additionally, these same communities "can also enhance the level of interaction among their residents in order to contribute to rising levels of civic welfare, revitalize rural landscapes, improve environmental quality, and promote long-term sustainability" (Lyson 2000:44). DeLind (2002) argues that currently the tendency for civic agricultural projects is to focus first on market transactions and that "the logic of civic-ness is still a wished for second thought, something, it is assumed, that will spontaneously fall into place once our many, personal, green needs have been met" (p. 219). For DeLind, increasing interactions between producers and consumers may not lead to increased civic wellbeing. Instead, she asserts there needs to be more of a focus on culture and place, on being in place. For DeLind, civic agriculture can also be "a tool and a venue for 'grounding people in common purpose' – for nurturing a sense of belonging to a place and an organic sense of citizenship" (2002:217).

DeLind argues "that a sense of place and embodied work in a place are essential elements of civic agriculture and civic engagement" (2002:222). Drawing on Daniel Kemmis (1990), DeLind explains his concept of inhabitation as "[t]he understanding of place and practice within

a particular place" (p. 220). DeLind explains that through inhabitation people are connected to their locales and the people around them and that through inhabitation they lessen their individual wants so they can work more for the community and the place beyond their individual desires. Through inhabitation, DeLind argues, people are able to be a part of a place and of the community of that place. She explains, "[i]t is also through the process of inhabitation that the raw material of citizenship, of civic virtue, of 'we-ness' emerges" (DeLind 2002:220). By giving up part of their individual selves people are able to give to the community and their place, their inhabited locale.

Regarding embodied work, DeLind states, "[i]f citizenship (and environmentalism) is framed by place, then it also is realized through work in place. To be truly civic, such work, like place itself, needs to be embodied (not abstract) and public (not individual)" (p. 221). DeLind draws on Harry Boyte and Nancy Kari (1996) in discussing embodied and public work. She explains that through public work engaging in the work activity itself is a way to benefit one's self and the community within which that work takes place. This public work encourages and is encouraged by participatory democracy. DeLind explains civic agricultural activities can offer the spaces where embodied and public work, including "public education and political practice can take place" (2002:221). Urban agriculture is a locale based phenomenon that can be civic agriculture and provide the social and physical spaces for civic engagement, including embodied and public work.

Through urban agricultural activities people are not only learning how to grow food, but in many circumstances they are also learning about nutrition; they are increasing their civic participation, building social capital and community; and, arguably, setting the building blocks in place for a stronger civil society and a fairer agrifood system. Lyson (2004) argues, "[u]rban

gardens nurture not only plants and animals but people and their cultures as well. Urban gardens can teach entrepreneurial skills and spawn and sustain a broad range of new employment opportunities" (p. 96). Lyson explains that in community gardening people can learn horticultural skills, but there is also the possibility that "new marketing initiatives, environmental management activities, and community development processes" can take place (2004:96). McClintock (2010) notes, urban agriculture is also described as having the "ability to strengthen a sense of community, reconnect consumers with farmers, raise awareness of environmental and human health and keep money circulating locally" (p. 192). He continues, "[e]cological farming practices reduce the amount of agri-chemicals used, curbing environmental pollution and threats to public health" (McClintock 2010:192).

Allen (1999) asserts, "[u]rban agriculture can be a form of self-provisioning, either as a matter of survival or as a source of fresh and healthy food, and can also be a means for generating income" (p. 123). She continues "[u]rban agriculture is of course not a total solution to urban food security problems" (Allen 1999:123). Allen (1999) cites Rachel Nugent (1997) and argues, "[t]he poorest residents have little access to production possibilities and urban agriculture will do little to improve income distribution" (p. 123). Allen continues, "[t]hese are the kinds of inequities that are the cause of food insecurity in the first place" (1999:123). Today, more low income people are involved in urban agriculture activities. Many are learning skills, to not only produce food for themselves, but some are also becoming entrepreneurs and earning income by selling their products. I will return to this point when I discuss urban agriculture in Kansas City in chapter five. Allen argues, "[u]rban agriculture is an addition to, rather than a substitute for, 'regular' production" (1999:123). Although urban agriculture that is dominated by small plots which predominantly produce fruits and vegetables, "cannot begin to meet people's complete

food needs. Yet, they [small urban plots] can be an important source of nutrients crucial to overall health" (Allen 1999:123).

On the one hand, community gardening can also provide social spaces for civic engagement and organizing among diverse peoples, and they can "turn[ ] blighted abandoned spaces into lush spaces of relief in the harsh inner city," (Allen 1999:123). On the other hand, gardens can be a temporary use of the land until, for example, the owner(s) decide to develop the land to generate profits (Allen 1999:123). In addition, urban land often has to be used cautiously. Bingen et al. (2009) explain, "[b]ecause of past industrial use or other types of pollution, many vacant lots, or brownfields, that might be available for urban agriculture are unsafe for growing food and require some type of soil remediation" (p. 111). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a Brownfields Federal Partnership Action Program that provides communities with technical and sometimes financial assistance for the remediation of urban agricultural plots (Bingen et al. 2009).

Along with urban agriculture being a locale based phenomenon and oftentimes a civic agriculturally minded experience, the concept of food justice can build upon the civic agriculture discourse by emphasizing the need to address race, class, and food simultaneously. Food justice comes from the environmental justice movement and literature (Alkon 2012). For some, food issues are considered an aspect of environmental justice, for others, such as Gottlieb and Alkon, they are highlighting food justice on its own terms as an expansion of the environmental justice discussion. Gottlieb and Fisher (1996) called for collaboration between environmental justice and community food security activists with the belief that such collaboration "would help establish a new community development, environmental, and empowerment-based discourse" (p. 193). Food justice has emerged as such a discourse. Recently, activists and academics have been

discussing food justice, which is conceptualized in various ways (Griffith 2003; Wekerle 2004; Levkoe 2006; Allen 2008; Alkon and Norgaard 2009; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Alkon and Agyeman 2011 eds.; Guthman 2011; Alkon 2012). Alkon and Norgaard (2009) explain the concept of "[f]ood justice places the need for food security—access to healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food—in the contexts of institutional racism, racial formation, and racialized geographies" (p. 289).

Guthman (2011) criticizes the food justice movement for its emphasis on fresh and local food, and she argues the movement "also gives scant attention to other injustices in the food system, particularly those arising in food production: exposure to toxic chemicals, poor working conditions as they apply to health and safety, and disparities in wages and employment" (p. 155). However, as Gottlieb and Joshi (2010) express, food justice "has the potential to link different kinds of advocates, including those concerned with health, the environment, food quality, globalization, workers' rights and working conditions, access to fresh and affordable food, and more sustainable land use" (p. 5). Not to detract from the focus on race, class, and food, but food justice can also be a broad concept that allows for a holistic approach to and analysis of the intersections of gender, socio-economic status, environmental context, including land use, food production, and distribution. Alkon argues for maintaining the focus on race, class, and food:

> Indeed, food movement calls for food justice have been so resounding as to obscure the movement's roots in marginalized communities. In contrast to other work on food justice, (Gottlieb and Joshi 2010), I believe it is important to honor the roots of struggles for food justice in communities of color and responses to institutional racism (2012:173-174).

Who is participating in urban agricultural activities? To what extent are urban agricultural activities fostering fairness in the agrifood system? These issues will be explored in chapter five,

"Civicness of Urban Agriculture." Next, in chapter three, "Methods," I explain my approach to the study, the methods utilized, and the context in which my fieldwork was completed.

Chapter 3 - Methods

My theoretical approach to this project is a combination of a critical and interpretive food systems approach. In addition to utilizing data on Kansas farming from the BACC: FLUD project, I explored the Kansas City agrifood environment generally, but I focused on the operations of urban fruit and vegetable growers participating in community gardens, charitable gardens, school gardens, educational gardens, and market farms. I particularly focused on growers' and agrifood participants' activities in the urban core. My methodological approach is a version of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2006), and the methods used are participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and primary and secondary data analysis.

Using a food systems approach means that while I focus on growers' experiences by interviewing and engaging with them, I am exploring the broad U.S. agrifood system that includes production, distribution, and consumption. Brown and Schafft (2011) explain, "[t]o appreciate agriculture's place in society fully it is necessary to view farming as a constituent part of a broader food system" (p. 179). By a critical approach I mean in the Marxist or the Frankfurt School sense in that I see stratification in our societies and the unequal access and distribution of resources, life chances, and life outcomes to be problematic. As Kincheloe and McLaren state, "[a] critical social theory is concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system" (2002:90). My approach is also interpretive in the Weberian sense in that I familiarize myself with participants' activities, experiences, and beliefs, and I ask them how they view their situations, experiences, and our social institutions and structures. While discussing constructivist

grounded theory, Charmaz (2006) explains, "[i]nterpretive theory calls for the imaginative understanding of the studied phenomenon. This type of theory assumes emergent, multiple realities; indeterminacy; facts and values as inextricably linked; truth as provisional; and social life as processual" (p. 126-127). More specifically, in this project my approach is critical in that I focus on uncovering why some people do not have access to healthy food and what is being done about it. It is interpretive or partially social constructionist in that I conducted fieldwork where I engaged participants and asked them about their experiences and beliefs while I also examine the larger social structure.

I used a modified constructivist grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis. Charmaz explains, "grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves" (2006:2). She continues, "[w]e try to learn what occurs in the research settings we join and what our research participants' lives are like. We study how they explain their statements and actions, and ask what analytic sense we can make of them" (Charmaz 2006:2-3). Ethnographic methods of participant observation and interviewing were appropriate for the study.

In 2010 to 2011, before I officially started my fieldwork in Kansas City in June of 2012 after receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I worked as a part-time farm worker and then as a volunteer for three to four hours most weeks on a three acre urban farm in Lawrence, Kansas. I worked in the fall and into the winter of 2010 and I volunteered in the spring, through the summer, and into the fall of 2011. This allowed me to participate in all of the growing seasons over the course of ten months. I mainly assisted in harvest and the bagging of vegetables and fruits for the CSA and the market, but I also completed other tasks as needed. For example, some of the other activities I worked on included planting crops, pulling weeds,

watering, and grinding wheat berries into flour. This experience allowed me to learn more about daily small-scale farm operations, to learn more farming lingo, and to interact with and talk to all of the people that work on and who visit the farm. Through observation and discussions, I learned some of the reasons why people are involved with the farm, how they envision agriculture, and what they would like to see for its future. At the same time that I was engaged with this farm, as a Graduate Research Assistant, I was also in the process of preparing for and conducting my share of the interviews for the BACC: FLUD project and working with the interview team on data analysis. These experiences helped shape my curiosities and questions as I developed my proposal and the interview instruments for this study.

Before formally beginning interviews in Kansas City in 2012, I familiarized myself with the urban agricultural activities by not only analyzing primary and secondary data, but also by being a participant observer at events, farmers' markets, and volunteering with one of the urban farms. These activities and the interactions I had with urban agricultural participants increased my understanding of and comfort in the urban agriculture scene. While engaging in fieldwork I also focused on macro-level "interests in cultural, institutional, and social structural processes" (Markovsky and Thye 2001:23). The aim was to understand individuals' experiences and organizational and community activities, dynamics, and challenges.

By volunteering with growers and growers' organizations, interacting with participants, and participating in agrifood events, including farmers' markets and gardening workshops, I was able to observe and experience their organizational activities. Lofland et al. (2006) explain a way to "collect the richest data possible" is "by achieving intimate familiarity with the setting through engaging in some number of behaviors relevant to the setting and in face-to-face interaction with its participants" (p. 16). By participating, while also checking against information obtained with

other data sources, an in-depth understanding of the organizational and community activities was gained.

After going over the informed consent statement (see Appendix A), verbal consent was audio recorded for all of the interviewees. Interviews revealed how participants feel about their urban agricultural experiences; their organizations; and the organizations' relationships with others, including other organizations, community members, businesses, and governmental agencies. In addition, analysis of primary data (e.g., organizational websites and documents, newspapers, and blogs) and secondary data (e.g., surveys and Census data) was conducted in order to initially develop a rough sketch of the case study site and to aid in the triangulation of information collected from participant observations and interviews. Using these methods together, I aimed to (1) reveal the successes and challenges perceived and experienced regarding expanding food access, (2) explore the degree of civic engagement in community food activities and how it may differ from the past, (3) explore the extent of agrifood job creation, and (4) uncover what participants envision for the future of activities toward a community-oriented food system and the U.S. food system in general.

Although some of the interviewees specifically said I could use their real names, the identities of all of the interviewees are not revealed. When I discuss interviewees' comments specifically and when I share quotes I do not disclose information that may reveal their identities. In addition, when I discuss a particular garden, farm, or organization it does not mean that I interviewed someone from that entity.

The BACC: FLUD Project: Kansas Commodity Farming

For the Kansas conventional agriculture component, data collection by the BACC: FLUD research team began in 2010 after having received IRB approval. I joined the team, and

specifically the interview team, in the fall of 2010. In early 2011, the survey team mailed surveys to 10,000 farmers across Kansas inquiring about their farm operations; their land use decisions; their views on governmental policies and programs; and their views on issues such as biofuels and climate change. To be included in the sample a farmer had to have more than 50 acres in production and they had to generate more than $10,000 in annual sales. Six regions, Northwest, Southwest, North Central, South Central, Northeast, and Southeast, were used, in part, to represent variations in farming due to differences in water availability and climatic conditions across the state. The overall response rate was 25 percent (i.e., 2317/9316).

In the summer of 2011, a seven member team of social science professors and graduate students conducted face-to-face interviews with a random, representative sample of the nearly 650 survey respondents who volunteered to be contacted again about the project. A total of 151 interviews were conducted and 148 were transcribed verbatim. Farmers were asked over 85 question sets to gather more in-depth information on the topics addressed in the survey, including operator demographics and farm operation characteristics; farmers' land-use decisions in regards to crops, livestock, and water use; and their views on governmental policies related to land use, energy, and climate change. In addition, we also inquired about their families and their communities. The qualitative software NVivo was used for organizational purposes, coding, and analysis. Data collection and analysis is on-going through 2014. As a research assistant on the project, I have permission to continued access of the data for analysis alongside and with the other team members.

Site Selection: The Kansas City Area

The Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of Kansas City encompasses 15 counties in Missouri and Kansas (the central counties are in italics): (1) *Cass,* (2) *Clay,* (3*) Jackson,* (4)

Platte, (5) Clinton, (6) Caldwell, (7) Ray, (8) Lafayette, and (9) Bates in Missouri, and (10) *Wyandotte,* (11) *Johnson,* (12) Leavenworth, (13) Franklin, (14) Miami, and (15) Linn in Kansas (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Jackson County in Missouri and Wyandotte County in Kansas encompass the urban core of Kansas City, and my research focuses on these two counties. The urban core is home to the business district and also to areas with histories of poverty, crime, poorly funded schools, and abandoned and deteriorating properties, including homes and businesses.

Kansas City is a unique place to explore urban agriculture for a number of reasons: (1) it is located in two predominantly conventional farming states which provides both opportunities and challenges; (2) people from diverse groups, races, and classes are involved; (3) there are numerous and varied gardens/farms on both sides of the state line; and (4) there are a variety of organizations and programs that address agrifood system issues, which do not necessarily stop at the state line. As it will be discussed, there are university extension programs in Missouri and Kansas that promote urban agriculture along with numerous non-profit organizations, but overall most of the agricultural funding in the two states goes toward large-scale conventional farming. Gardens and farms are located in and supported by various neighborhoods from impoverished areas, including food deserts, which are predominantly occupied by people of color, to upper-middle class neighborhoods where Caucasians tend to live. Institutional support by a variety of organizations, including numerous non-profits provide a backbone of networking opportunities for urban growers and those seeking to get more involved in agrifood system activities whether in their own neighborhoods or more broadly across the city. These organizations include, for example, the KC Healthy Kids initiative which aims to reduce obesity, the Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition's educational and advocacy efforts toward creating a more sustainable KC

food system (KC Healthy Kids 2011), and Kansas City Community Gardens (KCCG) who has been working for over 30 years to provide education and resources to those wanting to become involved and those who are involved in community gardening.

Yet, it is potentially a typical case as urban agriculture is being practiced in many cities across the country (e.g., Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, New York, and San Francisco), and it is being studied as a component of alternative agrifood activities. Studies have examined aspects of food systems in, for example, Kansas City (Hendrickson 2009), northeast Kansas (Champion 2007; Peterson, Selfa, and Janke 2010), Lansing, Michigan (Delind 2011), Detroit, Michigan (Litjens 2009), Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Lezberg 2003), Oakland, California (McClintock 2011), and across California (Allen et al. 2003; Guthman et al. 2006). In addition, community gardens thrive in other Kansas metropolitan areas, including Lawrence, Manhattan, Topeka, and Wichita.

Table 3.1 Kansas City and Kansas EPSCoR Farmer Respondents' Demographics

People and Place	Population (2010)	Percent White, Non-Hispanic (2010)	Percent Bachelors' Degree or Higher (2007-2011)	Median House-hold Income (2007-2011)	Percent Persons Below Poverty (2007-2011)	Percent Food Insecure Households, Counties (2010)[b], States, and National Averages (2009-2011)
Kansas City, Kansas[a]	145,786	40	15	$39,000	23	20.3 Wyandotte County 14.5 Statewide
Kansas City, Missouri[a]	459,787	55	30	$45,000	18	19.1 Jackson County 16.0 Statewide
United States	308,745,538	63 (2011)	28	$53,000	14	14.7 Nationwide
Kansas Farmers' BACC: FLUD Survey	--------	97	34 (2010)	$70,000 (2010)	-------	--------

[a]KCK is in Wyandotte County, while KCMO is in Cass, Clay, Jackson, and Platte Counties
Sources: Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012. "Household Food Security in the United States in 2011." (http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884525/err141.pdf)
[b]Feeding America 2012. "Map the Meal Gap." (http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx)
US Census Bureau. 2012. (http://quickfacts.census.gov)

Compared to cities, such as Detroit and Cleveland, that have experienced drastic economic decline and out-migration, Kansas City has experienced relative stability--although it has its challenges with chronic poverty, urban blight, and crime. Table 3.1 (above) provides information on city populations, racial composition, poverty, and educational attainment for Kansas City in Kansas and in Missouri, but it does not cover the entire greater Kansas City area. Statewide and national figures for the percent of the population estimated to be experiencing food insecurity are also shown. For comparative purposes, I include a few of the Kansas farmers' characteristics from the BACC: FLUD survey. For Kansas City, Kansas (KCK) the estimates only include Kansas City in Wyandotte County, whereas for Kansas City, Missouri (KCMO) the estimates include Kansas City in Jackson, Cass, Clay, and Platte Counties.

Table 3.1 (above) shows there are more people of color living in KCK, 60 percent of the population, and in KCMO, 45 percent of the population, compared to the nationwide average of 37 percent. Characteristic of farmers across the country, 97 percent of the BACC: FLUD survey respondents were white, non-Hispanics and mostly men (94 percent). As of 2007, nationwide 83 percent of principal farm operators are white men (USDA 2009). Both KCK and KCMO have median household incomes below the nationwide average and a great deal below the household incomes of the Kansas farmers. In addition, on average from 2009 to 2011, 14.7 percent of U.S. households were considered food insecure. They were unable to meet all of their food needs on a regular basis. However as mentioned in chapter two, in 2011 while 11.4 percent of white non-Hispanic households were estimated to be food insecure, 25.1 percent of black households and 26.2 percent of Hispanic households were considered food insecure (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2012). Statewide household food insecurity averages for Kansas at 14.5 percent and for Missouri at 16 percent are about the same as the national average. However, as noted in Table 3.1, in

2010, 20.3 percent of households in Wyandotte County, Kansas and 19.1 percent of households in Jackson County were considered food insecure. The affects of these factors--lower median household incomes, poverty, and food insecurity--among others, can be seen in the increased percentage of vacant homes in Kansas City. For example, about 10 percent of homes in KCMO are abandoned; and some neighborhoods in the urban core are standing nearly 25 percent empty (Kelly Edmiston's estimates reported by Mansur 2011).

The number of vacant homes has risen about 20 percent since 2007, and now there may be 10,000 to 12,000 abandoned properties in KCMO (Mansur 2011). In Appendix B, Figure B.1b, "Percentage of Empty or Abandoned Homes," the map shows that most of the zip code areas with higher percentages of vacant lots are in or near the urban core (i.e., in Wyandotte County in KCK and Jackson County in KCMO). For example, in parts of the zip code area 64127, in Jackson County, more than 10 percent and even more than 25 percent of the homes are empty (Mansur 2011). Mansur explains the abandonment of properties was occurring before the recent recession. Former KCMO Mayor Funkhouser asked, "'How do we deal with vacant homes, which are the symptoms of other issues, like discrimination, segregation, crime and schools?'" (Mansur 2011). Recently in KCMO, legislation has been passed and other changes are in the works that will make turning over abandoned properties to community and/or community development groups a more efficient and timely process. In addition to urban blight, the reality is that some areas are considered food deserts where the ability to access healthy food is challenged by reasons such as the lack of full-service grocery stores in the areas or because of the lack of access to transportation to get to the stores. This will be further discussed in chapter five, "Civicness of Urban Agriculture."

Data Collection Strategies

Kansas City Area Urban Agriculture

Participant observations included volunteering with community gardeners, educational growers, school gardeners, and market growers and attending urban agriculture meetings, events, farmer's markets, and workshops. In addition to informal conversations with participants at meetings, events, and while volunteering, I conducted 38 semi-structured interviews with participants from the following groups: charitable growers (3), community growers (6), school gardeners (4), educational growers (7), market growers (7), food advocates (4), community organizers (4), and governmental employees (3). Interviews with growers ranged from 38 minutes to 2 hours and 15 minutes and averaged 67 minutes per interview. Community member interviews ranged from 33 minutes to 71 minutes, and the average was 57 minutes. Therefore, in total the interviews ranged from 33 minutes to 2 hours and 15 minutes and averaged 64 minutes. I collected over 40 hours of audio recordings, and I transcribed the interviews verbatim.

To select interviewees, purposive and theoretical sampling was utilized. Purposive sampling is the strategic selection of cases that are believed to provide "variation across a set of cases" (Lofland et al. 2006:91-92) so that a broader or "deeper understanding of types" (Neuman 2003:213) can be achieved. In addition to different grower and key informant categories, I aimed to reach a diverse demographic of interviewees based on age, race/ethnicity, gender, and class. Theoretical sampling is the "seeking and collecting of pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories" as one aims to generate theory (Charmaz 2006:96). Charmaz explains, "[y]ou can use theoretical sampling in both early and later stages of your research--if you have categories to direct your sampling" (2006:107). I did not purposefully interview home gardeners, but it turned out that 9 of the 11 community members either grow food at their homes or in community

gardens. The various growers' groups represent numerous approaches for growing and distributing food. By exploring multiple groups, I am able to compare and contrast the activities they are engaged in, the degree to which they feel they are effective, and the visions they have for the future of agriculture. Interviewees from the community member categories provide additional viewpoints which aided in gaining a holistic understanding of the successes and challenges of urban agricultural activities.

I used intensive qualitative interviewing, where intensive interviewing "encompasses both ordinary conversation and listening as it occurs naturally during the course of social interaction and semi-structured interviewing involving the use of an interview guide consisting of a list of open-ended questions that direct conversation without forcing the interviewees . . . to select preestablished responses" (Lofland et al. 2006:17). Lofland et al. continue, "In either case, the goal is to elicit from the interviewee rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis" (2006:17). Charmaz (2006) explains,

> intensive interviewing permits an in-depth exploration of a particular topic or experience and, thus, is a useful method for interpretive inquiry. . . . The in-depth nature of an intensive interview fosters eliciting each participant's interpretation of his or her experience. . . . Thus, the interviewer is there to listen, to observe with sensitivity, and to encourage the person to respond (p. 25-26).

As we did with the BACC: FLUD interviews on commodity farming, the use of semi-structured interviews allowed me to compare responses to a core set of questions in order to produce more reliable interpretations and conclusions. With permission from the EPSCoR research team, I paraphrased some of the questions from the BACC: FLUD interview instrument and utilized them in my interviews in Kansas City. By doing this, I particularly aimed to address identical topics to reveal the similarities and differences in the two styles of food production, including grower demographics, farm/garden site characteristics, concerns with farming, and

views on governmental farm policies and climate change. Analysis of primary and secondary data occurred throughout the study. By using multiple data collection strategies I was able to triangulate, corroborate, and in a few instances straighten out the facts from information obtained from each source against the other sources (Creswell 2003; Yin 2003).

Data Analysis

Following Charmaz (2006) and Rubin and Rubin (2005), data collection and data analysis were done concurrently. For example, following Lofland et al. (2006) while attending an event or conducting an interview I made mental notes of things to look for or that I wanted to write about later, I causally jotted notes during the occasion, and then I wrote full fieldnotes afterward. I reflected on the information I had gathered or I noted the types of information I still needed by writing extensive, full fieldnotes. I also wrote fieldnotes throughout my fieldwork whenever thoughts arose that I believed would aid me later in the more formal analysis stage. I purposefully decided to transcribe all of my own interviews, to do so verbatim, and to record details of the interviewing experiences (e.g., pauses in speech, emotions such as laughter or exclamations, noises such as police sirens, and activities being done during the interview such as weeding in garden beds of strawberries). Lofland et al. advise transcribing one's own interviews, because "[i]t is in the process of transcribing that you truly 'hear' what the person has said, and, as such, this is a period in which analytic insights are most likely to occur" (2006:107). I began transcribing before I completed all of the interviews, and I transcribed frequently and intensively over a relatively short period of time. Transcribing interviews in such a detailed and intensive manner allowed me to further deepen my familiarity with the data. While transcribing I continued to write analytic notes, and I began to develop codes. Codes are "the labels we use to

classify items of information as pertinent to a topic, question, answer, or whatever" (Lofland et al. 2006:201).

When transcription was complete, for organizational assistance, I uploaded the Word documents into the qualitative software NVivo. Next, I developed my codebook, including my main codes such as demographics - grower, demographics - commMem, growing, community, urban agriculture, marketing and selling - UA, US food system, climate change, future of agriculture, movements, food desert, and Beans and Greens, for example (see Appendix C, "Main Codes and Sub-codes"). Then I coded the data. Charmaz explains, "[c]oding means naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categories, summarizes, and accounts for each piece of data" (2006:43). "Grounded theory coding consists of at least two main phases: 1) an initial phase involving naming each word, line, or segment of data followed by 2) a focused, selective phase that uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data" (Charmaz 2006:46). Charmaz continues, "[d]uring initial coding, the goal is to remain open to all possible theoretical directions indicated by your readings of the data. Later, you use focused coding to pinpoint and develop the most salient categories in large batches of data. Theoretical integration begins with focused coding and proceeds through all your subsequent analytic steps" (2006:46).

Line-by-line coding was first used for a few interviews, where a code was given for each line on the transcript. Then, I refined my codebook and moved into focused coding where I coded larger sections of information. Reflective note-taking continued at this phase or what Charmaz calls memo writing. Charmaz explains, "[m]emos catch your thoughts, capture the comparisons and connections you make, and crystallize questions and directions for you to pursue" (2006:72). Citing Kathy Charmaz (2001), Barney Glaser and Anselm Straus (1967), and

Anselm Straus and Juliet Corbin (1990), Lofland et al. (2006) explain how they have a broader view on memoing: "Although most discussions of memoing accent its analytic and theoretical utility for the development of 'grounded theory' . . . we believe it is equally relevant to theoretical extension and [theoretical] refinement" (p. 210).

After coding I followed Rubin and Rubin's (2005) advice and "systematically examine[d] concepts, themes, and topical markers, sorting them into appropriate groups, comparing them, and looking for patterns and connections . . . ." (p. 224). Next, I aimed to "extend [my] reach and look[ed] for the broader implications . . . by asking how [my] findings [could] modify, extend, or perhaps even create social, political, or behavioral theories" (Rubin and Rubin 2005:230). The results of this analysis are described in-depth in the remaining chapters. Next in chapter four, "Perspectives on the U.S. Agrifood System" after discussing commodity agriculture, I examine the social structure of urban agriculture and discuss how the Kansas City interviewees view the agrifood system, governmental policies and programs on farming and food, and the government's role in agriculture and food.

Chapter 4 - Perspectives on the U.S. Agrifood System

While commodity agriculture is the prevailing form of agriculture in the United States, there are other types. For example, as discussed, Lyson distinguishes between commodity agriculture and civic agriculture. Commodity agriculture refers to large-scale production that focuses on efficiency and yield, and it uses land intensively to produce for distant, often global, markets. Civic agriculture refers to smaller-scale, more sustainable production that gives greater consideration to socio-economic connections with local customers often through direct marketing at venues such as farmers' markets. The dominant style of agricultural production in Kansas is an example of commodity agriculture. Many of the participants in urban agriculture, particularly in Kansas City, have ideas on what agriculture and food processes and policies should and should not be in the United States.

Kansas Commodity Agriculture

Survey and interview data collected in 2011 on agriculture in Kansas, by the BACC: FLUD research team supplies a recent, in-depth look at farming in Kansas providing an example of commodity agriculture. Further details of the study are provided in chapter three, "Methods," and in chapter six, "Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System." As shown in Table 4.1 (below), there were 2,317 survey respondents out of 9,316 possible (i.e., 25 percent). They ranged in age from 21 to 99, with the average being 61 years old; 97 percent were white, non-Hispanic; and 94 percent were men. The median educational attainment was "some college." Just over half of the households, 52 percent, reported having a household member employed off of the farm. The median household income was $70,000, the median percentage of the household income derived

from the farming operation was 50 percent, and the median gross sales from the farming operation was $125,000. While 1980 was the most common year that the farmers began farming, 1974 was the median year. In terms of the ownership structure, 76 percent of the farms are owned by either an individual or a family, 12 percent are considered partnerships, and 7 percent are corporations. The average total number of acres in an operation, whether owned and/or rented, was 1049 acres, while the median was 560 acres. A corn-soybean rotation was the most frequently mentioned crop rotation on irrigated and non-irrigated cropland. Wheat was also a common crop grown on non-irrigated land. Half of the farmers also raised beef cattle.

Table 4.1 Kansas EPSCoR Farmer Survey Respondents' Demographics, 2011

Respondents	Average Age in Years	Percent White, non-Hispanic	Percent Men	Education (Median Attainment)	Percent Married	Median Household Income	N
Averages/Totals	**61**	**97**	**94**	**Some college**	**82**	**$70,000**	**2317**

Table 4.2 (below) highlights some of the farmers' discourse on farming and policy based on their survey responses. Most responded they agree or strongly agree that they farm to earn a profit (91 percent), to enjoy the rural lifestyle (88 percent), and to have something to leave to their children (70 percent). While 62 percent responded they agree or strongly agree that farmland should be farmed to protect its long-term capacity even if it means a decrease in their production and profits, only 16 percent agreed or strongly agreed that farmers should use primarily natural fertilizers and methods, while 51 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement. They also reported that environmental legislation is unfair to farmers, with 70 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing. When asked if biofuels production in the United States is necessary to reduce our dependence on foreign oil 63 percent of the farmers agreed or strongly agreed. As a group, they were not in agreement on whether or not climate change is a scam

invented by bureaucrats and scientists with 46 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing, while 24 percent were neutral, and 18 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. Farmers were even more split on their responses to the statement that high energy use makes U.S. agriculture vulnerable and it should be greatly reduced, with 27 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing, 30 percent were neutral, and 30 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Table 4.2 Kansas Farmers' Survey Highlights, 2011

Statement N=2317	Percent Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Percent Neutral	Percent Agree/ Strongly Agree	Percent Don't Know
Farming to earn a profit	2	3	**91**	0.4
Farming to enjoy the rural lifestyle	1	5	**88**	0.4
Farming to leave something to my children (e.g., land)	5	17	**70**	2
Land should be farmed to protect its long-term capacity	11	19	**62**	3
Farmers should use primarily natural fertilizers and methods	**51**	25	16	3
Environmental legislation is unfair to farmers	5	15	**70**	4
Biofuels necessary to reduce dependence on foreign oil	12	14	**63**	5
Climate change is a scam invented by bureaucrats and scientists	18	24	**46**	7
High energy use makes U.S. agriculture vulnerable and should be greatly reduced	**30**	**30**	**27**	7

These results highlight that there are some similarities and differences between these Kansas commodity farmers compared to other growers, including large-scale corporate agriculturalists and civic agriculturalists, including urban growers. For example, a similarity is that many of the urban growers and many of the Kansas commodity farmers are involved in gardening/farming for reasons beyond just farm production. I detail this extensively for the urban growers in this chapter and in chapter five, "Civicness of Urban Agriculture." For the Kansas commodity farmers, as discussed above, although 91 percent of them agreed with the statement

that they are "[f]arming to earn a profit," unlike large-scale corporate farmers, this is not their only motivation. They also agreed with the statements that they are "[f]arming to enjoy the rural lifestyle" (88 percent) and they are "[f]arming to leave something to [their] children (e.g., land)" (70 percent). Overall, these Kansas commodity farmers also prefer their farming neighbors and their communities to be socially and economically successful, in part, so that a favorable business environment is maintained for their farms.

A difference between the urban growers and the Kansas commodity farmers is expressed by Lyson's (2004) differentiation between civic farmers and civic agriculture. He explains that farmers may be active in their local community's civic affairs and they may be regarded as "'good citizens,'" but because their agricultural production is focused on export markets and there are other activities that are not directly for the community's benefit they "[are] not [ ] civic enterprise[s]" (p. 62). However, they may make civic contributions, because they are producing agricultural products, and they participate in community activities (Lyson 2004). Whereas with civic agriculture and the civic-minded urban growers discussed, they are largely focused on community sustainability, whether that is a group involved in a community garden, a neighborhood issue, or a city-wide concern. A lot of their energy, such as food production, distribution, food donations, and advocacy are focused on their communities, and for some, they are focused on changing the larger agrifood system toward a system that is fairer in terms of social, environmental, and economic concerns. Except for a few market farmers, for the most part they are not solitary farm family businesses. As discussed, the tendency of commodity farmers to have an outward focus by exporting agricultural products out of the community, even those who may be civic farmers, is one of the critiques of the agrifood system. This outward

focus decreases the chances that food production and consumption occur in the same locale, thus mutually supporting one another. This is returned to later in the chapter.

As discussed in chapter 3, "Methods," in the summer of 2011 after the survey had been conducted, a seven member team engaged in 151 semi-structured interviews with a sample of the survey population. Of the 151 interviews, 148 were transcribed verbatim and coded utilizing NVivo software. In the interviews we were able to gather in-depth answers to a series of questions on topics ranging from land use to farm operation and household characteristics and from views on governmental policies to community dynamics. The focus here is on what they find most challenging or difficult about farming and what they think about the argument that humans are causing climate change.

The following quote almost sums up what respondents said they find the most challenging or difficult about farming, "[o]h man . . . that's a tossup . . . weather . . . government regulations . . . costs." Financial concerns, including marketing, and keeping up with the rising costs of inputs and machinery were the most commonly discussed challenges, but that was closely followed by the weather. Some mentioned dealing with paperwork and governmental regulations, or "governmental intervention" as it was sometimes described, was challenging or frustrating. Another farmer explained what he finds most challenging, "[w]ell today, it would be the economy, the cost. I actually would not want to start farming because the costs are prohibiting. And there's always the uncertainty of weather and prices."

We also asked farmers what their thoughts are on climate change and what they think about the argument that humans are causing climate change. Around 40 percent of the farmers

who were asked[6] about climate change explained, that apart from natural cycles, they did not think it was occurring, and they did not believe humans were causing it. The following was a common reply, ". . . I think that, uh, I think it's a little egotistical that humans think that they are causing climate change. I don't think that humans are doing any[thing], I think it's just blown out of proportion, you know." When asked if the farmer had anything else to say about it he responded, "[u]h, I don't know, I just think that it's, uh, politicians and [the] news media [that] have gotten into it and blown it out of proportion." About 10 percent of the farmers said they did not know if climate change was occurring and if humans were a cause. Around 15 percent of the respondents, or about 20 farmers, said that maybe humans were a factor in causing climate change. For example, one farmer said, "[w]ell . . . I know we burn a lot of fossil fuels . . . but at the same time, I think some of their arguments that we cause it all, is not true. I think that the earth goes in cycles, like I said before, and I think that's part of it. And, we might have some minor effect, I don't know."

Nearly 29 percent, or 38 farmers, said human actions are impacting climate change. Their responses ranged from saying that humans have a small impact to explaining that people are probably a large contributing factor. For example, one farmer said, ". . . whether the emissions and all this stuff or the fossil fuels we use, if that's causing some—it probably is. It's probably not helping it any. . . . But whether it's the whole cause of it I don't know." Another farmer replied, "[h]mm, I think that if there is a climate change, it probably is between [pause], you know, the cars, and the factories, and everything we're putting in the air, I'm sure that we probably could be the ones causing it."

[6] As sometimes happens in qualitative interviewing, it appears that not all of the farmers were asked about climate change or they did not answer the questions about it. Here, this accounts for about six percent of the interviewees.

In addition to the insights on farming and policy from the survey and the discussion of differences between types of growers, the viewpoints provided on challenges to farming and views on climate change reveal more information on what it is like to be a commodity farmer today. Critiques of the agrifood system in chapter two were mostly from non-farmers looking at farming, and here farmers are speaking for themselves which provides a different vantage point in looking at the agrifood system. These insights show that farmers are thinking about agriculture on a broad scale and that most of them have considered the arguments about human actions contributing to climate change. Both of these issues will be returned to in this chapter and the remaining three chapters. For now, the focus turns to another type of agriculture, particularly urban agriculture.

Urban Agriculture

Conventional commodity agriculture is not the only style of agricultural production. In the United States there are sustainable and organic producers who may grow on a large scale, but not in vast monocultures, although there are those who grow that way. There are also midsized and small-scale sustainable and organic growers located in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas that practice polyculture (i.e., growing a variety of crops at the same time in close proximity to each other.). The focus here is on urban agriculture. Urban agriculture is food production in and near cities. As discussed in chapter two and as it is discussed in-depth in chapter five, urban agriculture can be civic agriculture. For Bailkey and Nasr (1999) urban agriculture focuses on the intensive food growing and animal raising activities, along with their processing and distribution, that occur within and near cities. Food production in cities has been in existence throughout history. For some people the interest in growing food is for their own consumption or to primarily sell to others. For others, such as many of the people I spoke with for this study,

there is a social justice component as to why they are involved in producing food. This is the type of urban agriculture that can be civic agriculture. When their activities also focus on and aim to lessen inequalities at the intersections of race, class, and food then these activities are what Alkon and Norgaard (2009) and others refer to as promoting food justice. There are households that experience food insecurity, and in some cases this includes children. There are locales considered food deserts where the ability to access healthy food is challenged by reasons such as the lack of full-service grocery stores in the areas or because of the lack of access to transportation to get to the stores. Many growers also engage in building community, strengthening relationships within and between their neighborhoods, and assisting in advocacy that promotes a range of issues. For example, advocacy efforts aim to increase access to healthy, fresh foods; to update ordinances and zoning laws to make it easier for people to grow, sell, and distribute food; and to continue to educate the public and governmental officials on the benefits of more regionalized and localized agrifood systems.

Global and Historical Urban Agriculture

Smit, Ratta, and Nasr (1996) provide a discussion of urban agriculture across the world; and they mention that it is has been a tradition in various cities, and it is only new in a few places. They note the importance urban agriculture has for people and cities across the globe, and they say it is a great contributor to the development of urban areas. In fact, Smit et al. mention that in some developing economies it is one of the biggest industries. Urban agriculture can provide access to fresh foods for poor people; low cost, but good quality food and a source of income for the stable poor; and for middle-income households, it can provide an opportunity to generate income and to save some earnings (Smit et al. 1996).

Smit et al. (1996) explain that worldwide data on urban agriculture is limited, and the percentage of households engaged in urban agriculture varies from 10 percent in some of North America's large cities to as high as 80 percent in some Asian cities. In the 1980s there was a great increase in the importance given to urban agriculture across the world (Smit et al. 1996). They report survey results that show in Moscow the percentage of households participating in urban agriculture went from 20 percent in 1970 to 65 percent in 1991, that in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania the increase was from 18 percent in 1967 to 67 percent in 1991 (Smit et al. 1996:25). In China in the 1980s more than 90 percent of the vegetables consumed in its 18 biggest cities were produced in urban areas (Smit et al. 1996). Urban agriculture is popular in various European countries, such as Italy, France, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, and the Netherlands; African nations, including Uganda, Mozambique, and Zaire; and across Asia (Smit et al. 1996).

Although in the United States, urban agriculture is receiving a great deal of press, it is not a new phenomenon; rather it is experiencing a revival. Lawson (2005) discusses the experience of U.S. urban gardens from the 1890s to the present. In the 1890s to 1917 the cultivation of vacant lots was promoted as a way to provide jobs for the unemployed while increasing the food supply (Lawson 2005). The existence of school gardens and civic garden programs grew at this time (Lawson 2005). Industrialization and urbanization contributed to the rise of urban problems, such as pollution, unsanitary social conditions, and volatile economic circumstances that needed to be dealt with (Lawson 2005). Urban gardens were seen as a way to decrease economic instability, address urban congestion, lessen environmental degradation, and aid immigrants (Lawson 2005). During the 1890s, social reformers believed in environmental determinism which is "the belief that changes in the physical environment produce changes in people's behavior" (Lawson 2005:20). This philosophy contends that by creating urban gardening

programs, not only would the environment be enhanced and more food would be grown, but social and economic conditions could be improved through the participation of unemployed and poor people in the gardening programs (Lawson 2005). Lawson (2005) mentions that urban gardening programs were only a small part of the numerous proposals for urban planning, but they were regarded by many as a contribution to urban reform. Dickinson (1995) points out drawbacks to these reform efforts as they occurred in Philadelphia. She explains that before regulations against growing food and raising animals in the cities, families were able to do these activities which provided income and low cost food. With the increasing regulations then more money was needed for provisions which was hard for many families to obtain (Dickinson 1995).

Those involved in urban gardening programs from 1917 to 1945 expanded their scope from focusing on self-help for the urban poor and recent immigrants to include individuals and households across the United States (Lawson 2005). When the United States was engaged in WWI, programs promoting increased food production for export and for domestic use were activated (Lawson 2005). This included urban gardens. To assist in the amount of food that could be exported to Europe to help relieve their food shortages, the U.S. government, through the war garden campaign, encouraged residents to decrease their consumption of exportable goods, such as beef, dairy products, and wheat, while increasing their consumption of foods they could buy locally or grow themselves, including fruits and vegetables (Lawson 2005). With the end of the war, home, school, and community gardening continued for awhile under the new name of victory gardens instead of war gardens, but with time widespread federal support for urban gardens faded (Lawson 2005). Again in WWII export and domestic food production, including in small urban plots, was propped up (Lawson 2005). One of the aims was to increase domestic food security. It is estimated that in 1942, 7.5 billion pounds of food was grown in 15 million

Victory Gardens across the United States (Lawson 2005). When the crises passed, widespread federal support for urban gardens diminished (Lawson 2005).

In the late 1960s more people began to voice more loudly their concerns with rampant social and environmental inequalities. These people preferred to live more in harmony with nature and live less in a way that exploits natural resources to support a way of life promoting mass consumption. There were also concerns with food issues, such as hunger, and the flight of supermarkets out of urban areas (Winne 2008). By 1969, the environmental crisis peaked with the widespread instances of pollution, such as a damaging oil spill and disruptive smog alerts in California; a river catching on fire in Ohio; the spread of news stories concerning world hunger and soil erosion; and more reports regarding the dangers of DDT (Belasco [1989] 2007). New community-owned, consumer food cooperative buying clubs and stores and cooperative gardens took off during this time (Belasco [1989] 2007).

Between 1965 and 1970, the number of communes in rural areas increased five-fold to around 3500 (Belasco [1989] 2007). It was in the rural communes that the counterculture could go "beyond personal protest to build a cohesive model community" (Belasco [1989] 2007:76). In communes they could experience the interconnections of nature, they could relate to the peasants' lives they were aiming to support and emulate, and they could get away from the society they opposed by leaving the cities and joining with like-minded people in rural areas (Belasco [1989] 2007). There were many who stayed in the cities and put down roots. For example, the creation of a vegetable garden, People's Park, in an empty lot at the University of California at Berkeley on April 20, 1969, was seen as a highpoint in the new found environmentalism for many in the counterculture (Belasco [1989] 2007). The new focus on ecology was seen as an approach that could yield quick results, because one could begin at any

time in their daily lives to make food and consumption choices that would lessen their impact on the earth and promote better practices at the same time (Belasco [1989] 2007). Belasco argues:

> Unlike sporadic antiwar protests, dietary rightness could be lived 365 days a year, three times a day. The New Left had always insisted that the personal was political. What could be more personal than food? And what could be more political than challenging agribusiness, America's largest and most environmentally troublesome industry . . . ? ([1989] 2007:28).

This new way of eating, which Belasco ([1989] 2007) calls countercuisine, entailed eating fresh, preferably organic foods instead of processed, industrially produced foods; having more fun with food by cooking new dishes for example; and subverting the dominant food industry by participating in hip restaurants, food cooperatives, and communal farms.

The 1970s to the 1980s saw the next widespread resurgence in urban gardening programs (Community Food Security Coalition 2010; Lawson 2005). In the mid-1970s while facing the energy crisis, rising costs for food, and a growing interest in environmental issues, more people turned toward self-reliant practices, such as urban gardening (Lawson 2005). "Faced with racial tension, a declining urban population, abandoned properties, and urban renewal projects that were tearing neighborhoods apart, local residents and activists sought to reclaim and rebuild communities and expand the open-space resources in their neighborhoods through gardening"—community gardening (Lawson 2005:206). For example, Winne (2008) documents the rise of the Hartford Food System as it began in 1979 with the aim of increasing food self-reliance for low-income households while also supporting Connecticut's farmers (p. 13). As discussed in chapter two, the local system was to include from community gardens to markets, from food banks to policy councils, and from CSAs to farm initiatives (Winne 2008). In the 1990s, the urban gardening movement expanded (Lawson 2005). Gardener training and entrepreneurial programs

were bolstered in the 1990s (Gottlieb 2001), and they continue today with many urban residents learning gardening and business skills they can possibly use in future careers (Lawson 2005).

KC Interviewees' and Their Perspectives on the Agrifood System

As mentioned, I interviewed 38 growers and community members from the following groups: 3 charitable growers, 6 community growers, 4 school gardeners, 7 educational growers, 7 market growers, 4 food advocates, 4 community organizers, and 3 governmental employees. Table 4.3 (below) summarizes the demographics of the growers interviewed and some of the site characteristics of the gardens and farms. Table 4.4 shows the demographics for the community members, and Table 4.5 summarizes the totals and the averages of the two groups. The highest levels of the educational degrees earned by the participants are presented in Table 4.6. Table 4.7 shows the broad occupational categories of the interviewees. I will remark on a few of the findings. Even with having earned a Bachelor's degree or higher, 15 of the 38 interviewees explained their perception of their class status was lower middle class or below. Some were not bothered by this, and they expressed their relative comfort with their jobs, their incomes, and the activities they are involved in within their communities that do not have to do with striving to make a lot of money and to acquire power and fame. A few reveal in this voluntary simplicity (Elgin 1998). People of color were slightly more likely than the Caucasian interviewees to describe their perspectives on their class statuses as lower middle class or above.

Regarding marital status, 14 of the 38 are married, while 24 are either single, in a relationship, or divorced. With that said, the interviewees did not specifically attribute their involvement in urban agricultural and community activities to their non-married relationship status. Although it was not pursued in this dissertation, their relationship status could be a contributing factor as to their involvement in these activities. Of the 11 of 27 growers who rent

their sites, 8 said they feel they have long term rental agreements. Whether in their own yards or in community gardens, 9 of the 11 community members grow some of their own food, so 36 of the 38 interviewees grow food. There are more farms and gardens in Jackson County, Missouri, and it is reflected in the locations of the growers interviewed with 19 located in Jackson County and the remaining 8 based in Wyandotte County, Kansas.

From my participant observation activities and the analysis of primary and secondary sources on urban agriculture in Kansas City, I believe my sample is a good representation of the population of participants in Kansas City. I spoke with a number of people, people of color and Caucasians, who work with lower-income and less educated growers, including a number of educational, school, and community growers and a few community members who spoke on their behalf. Their voices are represented.

Table 4.3 Kansas City Grower Demographics and Site Characteristics, 2012

Growers	Age[+]	People of Color	Women	Ed. (BA/ BS or above)	Marital Status (Married)	Below Middle Class[++]	Land Tenure (Rent)	Site Size (Less than 0.25 acre)	County (Wyan-dotte, KS)	**n**
Charitable Growers	51	0	2	3	2	1	0	2	1	**3**
Community Growers	35	1	4	3	4	4	2	2	1	**6**
School Growers	39	1	3	4	0	1	0	4	0	**4**
Educational Growers	41	3	4	5	3	1	4	5	2	**7**
Market Growers	44	1	5	5	2	5	5	2	4	**7**
Averages/ Totals	**42**	**6**	**18**	**20**	**11**	**12**	**11**	**15**	**8**	**27**

[+]Not all of the interviewees wanted to share their age, so it is approximate for some categories.
[++]Lower Middle Class, Working Class, and Below [Self Reported]

Table 4.4 Kansas City Community Member Demographics, 2012

Community Members	Age[+]	People of Color	Women	Ed. (BA/BS or above)	Marital Status (Married)	Below Middle Class[++]	Grow Some Own Food	County (Wyandotte, KS)	**n**
Food Advocates	39	1	3	4	1	1	4	2	**4**
Community Organizers	56	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	**4**
Government Employees	49	1	1	3	1	0	3	2	**3**
Averages/ Totals	**48**	**5**	**5**	**9**	**3**	**3**	**9**	**6**	**11**

[+]Not all of the interviewees wanted to share their age, so it is approximate for some categories.
[++]Lower Middle Class, Working Class, and Below [Self Reported]

Table 4.5 Kansas City Interviewees' Demographic Totals, 2012

All	Age[+]	People of Color	Women	Education (BA/BS or above)	Marital Status (Married)	Below Middle Class[++]	Grow Food	County (WY, KS)	**N**
Averages/ Totals	**44**	**11**	**23**	**29**	**14**	**15**	**36**	**14**	**38**

[+]Not all of the interviewees wanted to share their age, so it is approximate for some categories.
[++]Lower Middle Class, Working Class, and Below [Self Reported]

Table 4.6 Kansas City Interviewees' Highest Educational Attainment, 2012

Highest Educational Attainment	Asian	Asian American	African American	Caucasian	**N**
Less Than Bachelor's Degree	--	--	4	5	**9**
Bachelor's Degree	1	1	2	13	**17**
Master's Degree	--	--	3	9	**12**
Totals	**1**	**1**	**9**	**27**	**38**

Table 4.7 Kansas City Interviewees' Occupations, 2012

Occupations	Full-time	Part-time	Unemployed or Retired	**N**
Non-profit Employee	16	2	--	**18**
School Teacher/Administrator	3	--	--	**3**
Market Grower	4	--	--	**4**
Government Employee	4	1	--	**5**
Service Sector Employee	1	2	--	**3**
Business Employee	2	--	--	**2**
Volunteer or Small Income from Garden	--	--	3	**3**
Totals	**30**	**5**	**3**	**38**

KC Interviewees' Perspectives on the Agrifood System

Many of the participants in urban agriculture, and particularly in Kansas City, have ideas on what agriculture and food should be in the United States. While not necessarily using the terms food system or agrifood system, interviewees shared what they think of the dominant ways food gets to people, what they think of governmental policies on farming and food, and what roles the government should play in agriculture and food.

While the dominant agrifood system may be relatively efficient in producing, transporting, and distributing food, or "food products" as some of the interviewees referred to it, most of them do not think the dominant ways that food gets from the ground to the people in the United States is effective or that it is sustainable or socially just. A community member, a white female in her 30s, explained that, "I guess it all depends on how you define efficiency. . . . if your goal is just to create more and it isn't about quality or longevity of impact on human health or environmental health it's a highly efficient system." She went on to explain the fact that there is a global system "in which huge volumes of, um, agricultural products are created, processed, and redistributed as food-, as food [laughs], um, to millions of people across the world" shows that it is "profoundly efficient . . . ." She continued:

> if you are talking about efficiency of outcome and-, and human health consequences and environmental health consequences it's profoundly inefficient and it is all dependent upon, um, cheap oil, cheap fossil fuels and as soon as cheap fossil fuels are no longer available I think the efficiencies of that system collapse.

She said the system is "effective in making sure everyone has calories," but that as far as "being good stewards of the land and, um, of health, no [She laughs.]." Consistent with other interviewees, at different times she also talked about food deserts and how there is not enough access for many to fresh, whole foods and that obesity and hunger are simultaneously problems

in the United States. Another community member, an African American in her 40s, who lives and works in a food desert on food, health, lifestyle, and economic issues discussed why she thinks the dominant processes of how food is grown and distributed is not efficient or effective:

> I'm not . . . happy with the way the government gets it [food] out. I don't like the huge processing plants with all of the cows and the type of treatment that they're receiving and the quality of the product that we're receiving. I don't like how they control the seeds and-, and how that affects farmers and the amount of money they can make and how-, what they can put in the ground. Uh, that only certain things are supported financially from our government, um, the things that they feel will be dominant--the corn and the soybeans. I'm not in agreement with that, because there's so many other things that we need to have access to in this earth that we can grow that they're not willing to help make sure it's available to our society. So, the overall general, no, I'm not in agreement with how it gets out, not in America.

Similarly, on a regular basis through her work she sees poor and elderly people who suffer from diet and lifestyle related health issues, and she strongly believes in the power of balanced diets with plenty of fresh foods to help ease ailments. They are already working on educating their community on health, teaching cooking techniques, and working with other nearby groups to promote healthy lifestyles, including growing food and consuming local foods. A community gardener, a white female in her 20s, pointed out a number of environmental, health, and economic problems she sees with the mainstream production and distribution of food. She first explained why she does not think these processes are efficient:

> Uh, I wouldn't say that about the huge mega-farms and conventional farming methods [that they are efficient or effective]. I don't think it is efficient because it destroys soil quality and the environment and it's, for the most part, growing corn and soybeans which aren't a very good source of nutrition. And that's contributing a lot to the obesity epidemic which is inefficient for our health care systems and our productivity and a lot of other things. Um, there's also a shocking amount of hunger in the U.S. We're kind of the most overfed and under-nourished nation around. Um, the transport is widely inefficient. You're transporting massive amounts of stuff across the country when you can grow better food right where you are.

In response to being asked if she thought it was an effective system, she said:

> I guess if you define effective in terms of those growers are able to stay solvent, yes, but I don't think it's effective in terms of feeding the country. Um, and I think in a lot of ways those growers are propped up by subsidies and assistance from the government that they probably-, that could probably be used better.

When asked how subsidies could be used better, she continued and explained:

> I think, I mean I may go out of the realm where I really know what I'm talking about, but I think the most recent Farm Bill has included a lot more benefits to giant farmers than to small farmers and to urban farmers. And I think, um, redistributing some of those benefits could lead to a lot better health and food availability for communities.

A market grower, a white male, said the processes may be efficient, but they are not fair:

> Efficiency perhaps yes, uh, fairness no. Uh, it's, I mean, it's a pitiful situation. Unless somebody does something with Monsanto the-, the government is just going to continue to screw [over] the small grower . . . forever. . . . I mean that's even, uh, Obama's, [it's] not his fault, but it's something he's fallen into. Big Business is totally ruining the growth of, uh, organic growing and urban growing. And it's all, it's all, you know that's that upper-end-corporate thing, you know. They're out and out liars, thieves, and rascals [laughter].

This market grower provided a sarcastic answer to whether the system is effective. He argued, "[s]ure it's effective. It's called money and lobbies. You can buy a lot of politics that way." A community gardener, a white male in his 30s, who also sells at a market, provided similar answers. He explained that it is not efficient or effective:

> No. Not at all, it's probably the most inefficient and ineffective way of produce getting to markets that you could ever see. I mean the United States had it right a long time ago, and then, I don't know, mega-agriculture stepped in and destroyed the whole process and made it horrible, I think.

In response to being asked how it was right before, he replied, "[i]t was local and organic and family-run and now it's huge businesses, not organic, GMO foods that-, it's horrible." Both of

these growers are not happy with the power and activities of large-scale corporate farming, and they see smaller-scale and more sustainable and organic methods of growing and distribution as more beneficial for health. They both said at other points in the interviews how they appreciate their communities and how they see their gardens as integral to their communities.

The comments of an African American grower in her 40s highlight some of the problems urban growers see with the dominant agrifood system. In addition to selling at a market, she runs a gardening educational program. She explained that first she is aiming to be a successful grower and to find her niche at the market by offering products that differ from the other farmers. Then she explained her educational program where she shows kids from the urban core or any kids from the city and others who are curious "how they too can be empowered to have more control over their food sources." She expressed: "There's not a working full-scale grocery store for several miles in this area, not one . . . The last one that was here was closed down last year in the summer." Then she asked me if I had heard the term food desert, and I let her know I had, "[m]m-hmm." She explained:

> That's where we are [in a food desert]. So with that, you know, everything is moving further and further away, um, for some people they just get in their cars and go . . . But there's, uh, a[n], elderly population, you know, uh, a population of people who are economically deprived here that just don't have access to, you know, good food. And so, you know, you want to have a way, even if they have to use a small container . . . you know. And what if everything . . . that is growable here, you know, take some control so that you're not so, um, at the mercies of the grocery stores or lack thereof in our case.

She started growing food to provide fresh, healthy food to her family in a more affordable way. Then she saw growing food as a way to help educate the youth in her neighborhood on, for her, basic tasks, such as using a calculator and counting back change, along with growing food, that would build their life skills. As others have said, food can be a tool or a way to bring people together and open up a conversation (Allen 1999; Lyson 2004; Johnston 2008).

A school garden coordinator, an African American female in her 40s, expressed that the food system is too efficient and she "think[s] that's the problem. . . . You know, I think, um, we don't worry about [how] food gets to us as long as it's there." Similarly and more in-depth, a white male, a governmental employee in his 50s, explained how over the past 70 to 80 years agricultural production has increased with technological advances, including synthetic chemicals and biotechnology. He explained:

> It has been a great benefit in many ways, uh, we have very low-priced-, . . . We spend a lower percentage of our income on foods as opposed to other countries, and, uh, at this time it seems like things may be turning the other way. We're starting to spend a larger percentage, and I think that's one reason why, uh, many people are looking at this, uh, [urban agriculture] as an option.

While we were talking about the pros and cons of no-till, large-scale commodity agriculture, he remarked on how herbicides can be used in an effective manner: "Um, if you use the herbicides effectively, uh, I believe that, uh, you know, you can use small amounts in many instances and be very, uh, sustainable and productive in doing so." He continued to explain how effective he believes the food system is:

> It [has] become more and more effective I think, you know, over the years, so many people don't even realize where their food comes from . . . it's so effective, uh, they're able to, uh, purchase what they want . . . from the food stores, how they want it, and so, yes, it's, uh, very advanced.

Regarding larger-scale agriculture production, commodity farmers are using no-till techniques more and seeing it as better. Those I interviewed are not convinced that large-scale conventional agriculture is what we need now or in the future. Instead they argue conventional agriculture should use more sustainable practices, such as less fossil fuel energy and less synthetic chemical inputs. Some interviewees specifically mentioned we should produce more of the foods we actually eat (e.g., fruits, vegetables, and organic grains) and less feed grains and

GMO crops. Some urban growers are also using scale appropriate no-till methods but they are doing it organically and with mulch (e.g., straw). Interviewees' perspectives on current agricultural practices and what they see for the future of agriculture are further discussed in chapter six, "Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System."

Overall, having more food, particularly fruits and vegetables, produced locally for local consumption is seen as an efficient and effective way to get good food to people. A charitable grower, a white female in her 30s, said it is important to emphasize locally produced food, but there are challenges to that type of production and distribution process, because people are so removed from seasonal eating, and they are so used to convenience. She explained:

> I think the problem that as a whole, as a country as a whole we [have] gotten so out of that process that I think it would be very hard to get people back to that. . . . I mean there is the movement with locally grown produce and I think a lot of people do try to do that, but we've gotten so used to just being able to get the things that are just completely out of season whenever we want them. We can get strawberries whenever we want . . . and that's not the most effective way to do it. But I think we are so much of a convenience society now that I think it's going to be hard for people to revert out of that.

A community member, a white female in her 30s, said local food production and consumption can be a more efficient and effective way to get food to people, but it is not a silver bullet answer to solving agrifood system issues. She expressed:

> I mean look, this is not-, it's not a panacea. Local food can be inefficient. There are plenty of examples of that. So, um, it can be [efficient]. It at least, um, theoretically makes it possible to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels, because . . . you're shortening the supply chain, um, and in the case of urban agriculture you're largely eliminating, um, the fossil fuels necessary for production of the food, um, because you're not doing large-scale production, you're not using-, you're not using machinery which relies on fossil fuels . . . so theoretically it can be much-, much more efficient. Um, however, it's much more labor intensive.

As a number of the interviewees mentioned, having enough consistent and reliable people to help maintain a garden can be challenging. Gardening and particularly small-scale intensive farming do involve a great deal of physical labor, and, as it has been discussed the introduction and the continual advancement of machinery and technologies have decreased the amount of physical labor needed. This made many people happy and put others out of work at the same time. From my fieldwork it is evident that there are those willing to do the physical work, but it is not something for everyone.

Many interviewees said local production and consumption is happening on a smaller scale than they would like to see. Some particularly mentioned that the large-scale production of grains and meats will likely continue in rural areas, but more fruits and vegetables could be grown in and near cities. Local food, particularly when someone grows it close to their home, is seen as fresher and as more nutritious than food that is typically found in grocery stores that has been harvested before it is ripe and potentially shipped thousands of miles in transport vehicles that sometimes use carbon dioxide to alter the ripening process. A community member, an African American in her 40s, explained she sees urban agriculture and local food production more generally as adding to but not replacing larger-scale agriculture. She explained:

> I think every bit helps. I don't think that there will be enough [food] generated just through what is produced locally. . . . That we have to do a lot [ ] on the mass production level in order to sustain a nation that's as large as ours. Um, but I think every bit helps, and I think the local component is not something that should be ignored, it should be incorporated with the others-, other things that we do on a larger scale.

Some interviewees made it a point to mention that for them it is more about getting nutritious, affordable food to people than it is to support local in general because it is close by. The response of a white, female school gardener particularly shows how activities promoting

food justice, where everyone, including lower-income and lower-wealth people of color in the urban core can access organic food on a regular basis, can be civic agriculture. People are getting together and growing food and building community while they grow, while they work, and while they harvest and eat. She explained promoting local food is good, but for some, including those in the inner city, it is not about supporting local, organic foods and paying the price of those foods, because it is more about necessity. She commented:

> . . . we live in two different worlds. . . . I mean over, let's say this is Troost, which is the dividing line, the cultural dividing line, so east of Troost we have fewer farms, we have a few, and those are grow[ing] not necessarily for market, but more for the comm-, the, the neighborhood, we're going to share it, we're going to give it away. And so they eat it because it's free . . . um, and it's more like a community, and they've worked on it. And so they're sharing it together and it's a different kind of atmosphere. There's not like a locally grown food restaurant. . . . And I don't know if people would pay the little bit of extra cash this side of Troost for it. They might, some would, enough to make you big fatty cash? I don't know. Now, west of Troost, um, 39th Street has great . . . you know, restaurants that use locally grown produce . . . there's a lot of people in that area that will pay the extra cash for that. . . . And so that works wonders over there . . .

In the southern part of Kansas City, Missouri east of Troost Avenue it is largely composed of lower-income, lower-wealth people of color, particularly African Americans. The people living west of Troost Avenue--a number of blocks over in some areas--have higher incomes, more wealth, and they are predominantly white.

While most of the interviewees said urban agriculture alone could not meet U.S. food demand, a few of the interviewees said urban agriculture could meet U.S. food needs. A community member, a white male government employee, explained that urban agriculture cannot meet the nation's food needs, "but it can certainly meet a much greater percentage of the food needs than it does now." He explained that

> depending on how you define the term urban . . . I don't think there's enough urban land to-, to feed the entire nation. And I don't think there needs to be, uh,

> that urban agriculture needs to feed the entire nation. We've got a-, a huge, uh, nation in terms of land mass with, uh, many arable acres and, uh, there's certainly nothing wrong with using rural areas to produce much of our food.

Similarly, another community member, a white female in her 30s, said organic production through urban and small-scale farming could help meet food demand:

> . . . well, I don't think urban agriculture is the only answer. I think there's a lot of areas that are rural that would need to be farmed as well to meet the food needs, especially at the rate at which the population is growing and, um, I do think that if we put more emphasis on like organic or small-scale farms, uh, high intensity farming methods those would help with that.

I said, "so you do not think we should be trying to get rid of rural farming." She replied:

> No, but make it more sustainable. Like there are new methods for cattle farming that are not cruel and that are, uh, more sustainable and are using the resources that are already there rather than growing tons and tons of fields of hay or of, um, other grains to feed to livestock.

A market grower, a white female, said urban agriculture could not meet the food needs in the United States without intensive planning and focused policy changes. She explained, "I think that if legislation were put together to intentionally foment that specific end, absolutely. I think at its . . . current state now, not a chance. I mean, there has to be some very, very intentioned and focused planning to do that. But I absolutely think it could." I responded, "[a]nd why don't you think it could happen without intensive planning?" She argued:

> . . . because corporations are more powerful than people and than [the] government and they have more rights and they're much more protected. And so big, huge industrial ag[riculture] corporations of all kinds--be it Kraft Foods or be it Monsanto or be it, you know, just on and on and on. If-, they will continue to have the power because of the deep pockets, because of the capacity for lobbying. And so they're going to be able to continue to shape policy in ways that, you know, little ole' me and my dirty shoes are [not] ever going to be able to shape it. So, um, there would have to be some huge sweeping, sweeping changes in-, in people's thought processes and, uh, their values . . . . So it would have to start grassroots, but-, in order to get it, you know, people would have to be very, very

> . . . passionate about it . . . and then that would have to basically build up and up and up of people exercising the political process and their right to the political process to create momentum to make that change.

Reflecting Tocqueville, Bellah et al., Putnam, Eliasoph, Somers, and Lyson, this grower is advocating for people to participate civically and politically while they voice their concerns with how they want to see the agrifood system change.

Most of the interviewees are not satisfied with current governmental policies on farming. Some discussed ideas for policy changes they believed should happen. One community member, a white male in his 50s, explained that there need to be policies that would "level the playing field" for smaller farmers in relation to larger farmers. When I asked how these policies could come into existence, he responded:

> People could wake up and vote, um, and-, and make sure that-, that, uh, our representatives, the people that are supposed to be representing us, um, the fact that 80 percent of the country right now, or more want labeling of GMO foods that speaks volumes . . . and yet our legislators are-, are being dragged kicking and screaming into this conversation. It shouldn't be that way . . . It's huge, and-, and they're avoiding it like the plague, because there's so much money from Big Ag right now going into the system. They can't afford to look the other way and go and do the right thing. So, it's difficult, we've got to overcome that. We need to get money out of Washington. [Laughs.] . . . It-, it can't be a career job. You've got to represent. If you don't represent then you're out.

He would like to see more political involvement by those in civil society and a more responsive governmental body. An educational grower explained why he is not satisfied with current governmental policies on farming and food:

> I think that, uh, urban food should be heavily subsidized. . . . That's what I think. And I think that paying people to grow the genetically modified soybeans and corn is a crime that hasn't been understood yet. [Laughs] It's because they don't want to understand it, but they're doing it because there's money in it right now and, uh, and they get-, they get the farmers in a chokehold and, uh, so they can't save seed anymore, um, and the poultry-, the poultry people have gotten so big

> that they lay down the rules of how the poultry producers have to produce. And, uh, [Singing.] 'I owe my soul to the company store.'

A school gardener, a white male in his 20s, explained some of the issues he has with governmental policies on farming and food. He, like numerous interviewees, said that there needs to be changes to the policies to make access to water connections and use more affordable for growers. He explained how he is not satisfied with national policies:

> Oh, as far as national policies, no. Um, I think we have some really large issues to deal with. The Farm Bill is up for renegotiation and it's, uh, it's not looking good. I think there's a lot of issues with, uh, fossil fuel use and really unsustainable use of aquifers and there's not really enough look into adapting to climate change. We've been talking about mitigating, which we're going to just utterly fail at. So what we need is to keep trying to mitigate. We also need to adapt, and there's not really been enough talk about that on the national level. Um, so again like in the Midwest where we grow our corn, um, there's going to be a lot of a-, or very few just very extreme weather events and that's how we'll get most of our precipitation. It's going to lead to a lot of erosion, and it's going to cause a lot of problems for farmers and it's also going to be expensive through crop insurance. And subsidies are just a whole other issue I'm dissatisfied with.

I asked him why he is dissatisfied with subsides, and he said:

> I feel like they're quite unfair, actually, the way they're set up right now. . . . It's not fair to anyone who's trying to start out, and subsidies they mainly go to corporations, large corporations. Which there's nothing wrong with corporations, let me be clear about that, it's just it's an unfair system the way it is now.

In addition to saying he does not agree with the fact that while the "vast majority of people that have been asked directly" want genetically modified foods labeled and they are not labeled, an educational grower in his 20s expressed his dissatisfaction regarding national agriculture and food polices:

> . . . basically these monopolies that have been allowed to form, um, in the agriculture industries. And the fact that you can have general mistreatment of the farmer, in my mind. I mean they're so reliant now on Tyson and Monsanto and, just the fact that any corporation has been allowed to get that strong, I mean, you

> know, politicians . . . it's a nice bullet point to talk about, you know, supporting farmers, . . . but then a lot of times I think it's just lip service, because, I mean . . . who's really thriving right now are massive industrial farms and they're making tons of money. I mean unbelievable amounts of money. And you know, groups like Monsanto . . . the reason they've become so powerful directly corresponds with government policies and the fact that they've been allowed to patent living systems that self propagate. That's mind blowing to me that government laws have been made that allows them to sue farmers for copyright infringement! . . . so no, on a national level I'm disgusted. And then um, really, this propping up, it's become too, too about the big money, it's become too capitalist . . . I don't feel that it's about the people.

Reflective of Domhoff's arguments, these interviewees are troubled by the power large corporations have in shaping governmental farm policies to their benefit.

Almost all of the interviewees see a role for the government in agriculture. A common response was that there should be some incentives and subsides given to farmers to produce a safe and healthy food supply, but it should not be to the point where large and very large farm operations and agribusinesses are dominating the system and reaping all of the monetary benefits. Interviewees are more supportive of smaller, family farms where the family lives and works on the farm. Overall, they believe there should be more incentives and subsidies for small-scale production, including urban agriculture, which focuses on diverse cropping systems. A charitable grower, a white female in her 30s, remarked, "I think they need to do more in protecting the smaller family farms versus the big agribusinesses." An educational grower, a white male in his 30s, said there should be more support for foods we eat on a day-to-day basis and less support for commodity crops:

> Yeah. Yeah, I mean, you know, the commodity crop system where it just seems like that's where everything is getting pushed now-a-days. . . . it seems like what I've learned so far is that it doesn't-, it doesn't make sense to grow anything but a commodity crop, especially in the Midwest, just from the support that they're getting from the government . . . But as far as the government support, um, I think that if they showed enough support for the, um, for the, for the local crops that we

> eat on a more regular basis as much as they do for the soy, corn, and wheat, then I think that would create more of a sustainable, local support for our food system.

A community gardener, a white female in her 20s, explained the roles she sees for the government in agriculture:

> Yeah, I think the government should play a big role in agriculture, yeah, that's how people eat food, so [laughs] I think that they should regulate things in terms of environmental sustainability, that's a big one. I think they should make an intentional effort to support types of farming that promote health. I also think they should be incentivizing more young people to go into agriculture. A lot of small family farms are dying off with nobody to kind of take them on and we need more farmers to replace them.

A community member, a white female in her 20s, commented on the challenges smaller growers face in trying to get funding:

> There are very few grants right now, competitive grants, um, through like the USDA and others for local food production and I would like to see more funding sources, funding streams available for pilot programs so that we can figure out, you know, what the most effective way of doing a farm-to-school program is or the most effective way of, um, distributing urban, uh, produce in the city is a-, and I think there are a lot of possibilities for that, but so far the funding pool has been so small and the grants are so onerous that a lot of people that are really innovative aren't applying because it's just a big pain. We filled out one two years ago to the USDA and it was like 45 pages of directions and then it takes so much time to fill out the grant, so.

According to critics (Allen 1999; Poppendieck 1999; Wekerle 2004; Levkoe 2006; Johnston 2008) and many of the interviewees, the current structure of the agrifood system does not treat food as a right. Some experience food insecurity and live in areas deemed food deserts. In many areas cheap food in the form of processed food is more accessible than fresh, whole foods (i.e., food swamps). Many interviewees believe food should be a right, and some expressed it should be healthy, fresh foods. Numerous interviewees think it is the government's job to

ensure that everyone has access to food whether or not they can afford to purchase it. Some said it is not just the government's job, but that it is everybody's job. It is a societal responsibility.

Consistent with most of the interviewees, a community gardener, a white female in her 20s, explains why she thinks it is the government's job to ensure access to food for everyone:

> Yeah, um, I think, I think the function of the government should really be as a, as a safety net, sort of. I, I think, um, we're here in this kind of capitalist system that doesn't take care of everybody and that systematically oppresses certain people on the basis of all sorts of things. And I think the government's job is to mitigate those effects. Um, and to make sure that people get their basic human needs met no matter what position they are in in the country.

A school gardener, a white male in his 20s, also thinks it is the government's job. He explained, "[y]eah, I do. I don't think there's any other entity that will do it well enough or can do it well enough. Um, I think it is a human right to have good and healthy food." An educational grower, a white male in his 20s, said, "I think it's one of the primary functions of the government."

A white female, market grower sees it a little bit differently. She explained, "I suppose it's somebody's job. I don't know that they can ensure it. I don't think that they are ensuring it, so I think the food stamp program and the EBT, and the Beans and Greens program, that is our local match, helps. So it's everybody's job." Others mentioned that programs like SNAP aim to do this, but there are still those in need so it must not be reaching everyone. And it is not. Many who are eligible for SNAP do not apply for the program. Some do not know they are eligible, others see the benefits as too small, some feel the application process is too complex, and some forego the program because they do not want to be stigmatized by participating (USDA-FNS 2012a).

A few African American interviewees, growers and community members, explained it may partly be the government's job to ensure people have access to food, but the assistance

provided should be given in a way that also encourages or even requires able-bodied recipients to participate in skill building and other programs that can lead to better jobs and the improvement of their living situations. When asked, if she thought it was the government's job to ensure that food is available to everyone regardless of whether or not they can afford to pay for it, an African American grower in her 40s responded:

> Uh, the old welfare question [chuckles]. Hidden very well but, um, [laughter] I personally believe in one's own responsibility for one's self. . . . you know, you can't wait for somebody to do things for you, but I also believe there should be things available for those who aren't in a position to provide for themselves . . . but it should have stipulations of time and amount, so that it encourages people to become independent. I'm not one of these people that says you need to do away with all social programs, no, but in looking at what has happened down here in this [public housing neighborhood in a food desert] . . . I can definitely see the pros and the cons to it, because you get people who become, um, um, generationally, um, institutionalized to the system. And they just never get beyond where they are because, or not very much further, because they always are thinking 'oh, I can always, you know, go over here and get this from the guvment or something.' This kills our-, this's killed a lot of things in our community.

I asked her what she meant by things being 'killed' in the community. With a laugh she explained:

> Just the decline, just the lack of leadership. Everybody's always looking for the government to answer things instead of somebody standing up and saying, 'you know the government's not even a person, it's an entity that's, we're the people, we are the government, what are you talking about? We're the ones who are gonna answer the things that we are asking.' So I just-, it's crazy. It's just kind of like, wow, it's interesting when you really sit back and think about it, you know, we've got to take some responsibility for ourselves.

In this smaller subset of African American interviewees most of them were born into lower-wealth households and then moved up in socio-economic standing.

Summary

The discussion of Lyson's distinctions between commodity agriculture and civic agriculture and the insights from the BACC: FLUD survey and interviews shows how these farmers view farming and policy, the issue of climate change, and how they are currently experiencing farming. How these commodity farmers engage in agriculture and agricultural production does not necessarily involve thinking about how they should be producing organic fruits and vegetables to distribute to local consumers, including the poor. Their approach is more business based and more focused on distant markets. In addition, there is less of a concern with detrimental environmental impacts of the farming they do compared to how the KC interviewees view the agrifood system.

Regarding the discussions with KC interviewees, these results provide a response to my first research question regarding how the relations between civil society and the U.S. agrifood system impact the level of fairness in the system. In agreement with Domhoff and others regarding the power of the corporate community, many participants do not think the agrifood system is fair or sustainable, and they believe large-scale farmers and agribusinesses have the upper hand in the agrifood system. This is the case regardless of the interviewees' demographic characteristics or their grower versus community member status. Not all of the interviewees expressed this sentiment, but overall, the participants believe the state, society, and the agrifood system favors large-scale, commodity food production and distribution which makes it challenging for smaller operations, including midsized and small family farmers and urban growers to maintain their operations or to start new ones.

The results also support Lyson's notion of civic agriculture. Again, the responses did not differ across the demographic, community member, or grower characteristics of the interviewees.

Many participants think there should be more participation in and support for community-based food production and distribution that is more sustainable, and there should be less support for commodity agriculture and global distribution. In addition, many interviewees believe it is problematic that this system is heavily reliant on fossil fuel energy and its support of the continued use of it as the main source of energy. Concerns with energy sources and use will be further discussed in chapter six, "Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System." Most of the interviewees believe it is the government's job to ensure everyone has access to food. At the same time, a few African American participants said the government may need to play a role in ensuring access, but that the assistance program(s) should also encourage building job skills.

The next chapter, chapter 5, "Civicness of Urban Agriculture," is a detailed discussion of who is involved in urban agriculture in Kansas City, what they are doing, and how, in many cases, their actions and activities are not only producing food, but also building community, enhancing civil society, contributing to a more civic agriculture and increasing fairness in the agrifood system, and in particular cases, promoting food justice.

Chapter 5 - Civicness of Urban Agriculture

As discussed, urban agriculture can be civic agriculture. In this chapter I particularly examine this notion and address the second research question: To what extent are urban agricultural activities fostering fairness in the agrifood system, including access to fresh foods, civic engagement, and fulfilling careers, while also benefiting the environmental health of the city? I mainly address the issues of access to food and civic engagement, and to a much lesser extent I mention careers and environmental benefits. As a part of this analysis I am able to explore (1) a variety of urban agricultural initiatives; (2) the perceptions of the levels of community, business, and governmental participation and support for the activities; (3) the relevance of urban agriculture to poor and low-income people; and (4) how urban agriculture may or may not be impacting the area and its residents.

A Variety of Gardening and Farming Activities

Across the Kansas City area urban agricultural activities are underway which include, for example, home gardens, charitable gardens, community gardens, school gardens, and market farms. Various organizations, activities, and events support and promote urban agriculture. The growers have a variety of reasons why they are growing food and what they are aiming to accomplish. Some focus on growing food for their own consumption. Others strive to feed themselves and to sell to enough customers so they can maintain their operations. Some have been working for years to provide services and bring communities together with, for example, neighborhood associations. A strategy being utilized by individuals and communities to deal with the situation of food deserts and to revitalize their neighborhoods is to empower themselves

and their communities in learning the skills to grow some of their own food, to increase their knowledge of balanced nutrition, to grow and to eat fresh fruits and vegetables more frequently, and to strengthen their communities, in part, by participating in community food activities and building business relationships involving food.

An organization instrumental in Kansas City's urban agriculture is Cultivate Kansas City (CKC), formerly the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture (KCCUA). CKC, founded in 2005, is a not-for-profit organization which oversees a two acre certified organic farming operation, called the Gibbs Road Community Farm (GRCF) and manages an eight acre training farm called the Juniper Gardens Training Farm (CKC 2012). CKC is also a broader training center that provides educational and technical assistance on urban farming, it engages in research and policy advocacy and creation, and it works with others in the Kansas City area to promote sustainable food production and consumption (CKC 2012). For example, the Juniper Gardens Training Farm is home to a collaborative program with Catholic Charities of Greater Kansas City, called New Roots for Refugees, which trains re-settled refugees--many of whom were farmers in their home countries--on how to grow, market, and sell food based out of their own quarter acre plot. In 2010, the New Roots for Refugees program was a recipient of a Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program (BFRDP) grant totaling $379,125 (USDA-NIFA 2013). Kelly (2010) boasts that CKC's activities have helped over 50 growers in their cultivation of nearly 53 acres across Kansas City's metro area. CKC sells its certified organic produce directly to consumers through a CSA, at various farmers' markets such as the Farmers' Community Market at Brookside in Missouri, and to restaurants in Kansas City (CKC 2012).

CKC often works on projects with the KC Food Circle, which is an organization created in 1994 with the aim of bringing local producers and consumers together in order to promote a

more localized food system (KC Food Circle N.d.; Hendrickson 2009). CKC, and many other local farms, also work with the Growing Growers program to host apprentices and volunteers who may strive to become urban growers themselves. The Growing Growers program assists in coordinating apprenticeships, they offer educational workshops and events, and they host a listserv for growers, with the aim of educating beginning growers in the skills they need to be successful gardening/farming employees and entrepreneurs (Growing Growers N.d.). As of 2013, participants pay a $300 fee to join the apprenticeship program. Depending on the farm, they may earn $8.00 per hour for part-time or full-time employment over the course of the growing season. The KC Food Circle and the Growing Growers program are both, in part, projects supported by Kansas State University Extension and the University of Missouri Extension.

Another non-profit that is instrumental in promoting, creating, and maintaining home gardens, community gardens, and school gardens is Kansas City Community Gardens (KCCG). KCCG has been in operation since 1980, and they have been at their present location right on the edge of Swope Park in Kansas City (zip code area 64132) for nearly 10 years. In addition to their two to three acre site where their office is located, they operate five other community gardens around the city and provide assistance to an additional 200 Community Partner Gardens, including school gardens. Various individuals and groups utilize their services and have plots in their community gardens, including low-income people and community groups. KCCG provides assistance by offering its members free and discounted gardening supplies (e.g., seeds, soil, transplants, straw, lumber, and tools), by providing on-site help with construction and the maintenance of gardens, and by conducting free gardening workshops and events throughout the

year. Yearly membership fees range from $2.00 for low-income people to $15.00 for a large garden. Events and workshops are also free to the public. In 2012, they had over 2,000 members.

In 2011, a coalition between CKC, KCCG, and Lincoln University Extension, called Get Growing KC, was formed with the aim to provide more cohesive support to those who are already growing food or who would like to begin. With CKC and Lincoln University Extension's focus more on urban farms and KCCG's focus being more on urban gardens, this collaboration allows them to match the particular skill sets of their team members to the scale of the endeavor that the people requesting assistance are looking for. They offer free technical assistance for home gardening, community gardening, urban farming, and other community food activities to individuals and groups. They also provide free workshops on, for example, growing food, composting, water access, and business strategies. They also provide site assistance, mini-grants, and community networking opportunities. The program has been successful, and in June of 2013, CKC received a $220,000 grant from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City (HCF) to continue its programming which aims to "increase access to healthy food in high need communities" (Sykes 2013). This coalition resembles Tocqueville's (1935) discussion of the importance of civil associations to unite people to work together on issues they face. In Kansas City a need was seen for the groups to collaborate so they joined forces by developing a plan, applying for and receiving funding, and beginning their work toward meeting their aims. Their efforts have been seen as successful, and they have received more financial support to continue.

Another non-profit organization KC Healthy Kids (KCHK) and its off-shoot the Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC) have also been recipients of grants from the HCF in support of their programming. In June of 2013 they received a $300,000 grant. Through advocacy, educational outreach, and building and maintaining active networks, KCHK focuses

on decreasing obesity and improving the overall well-being of children in the area. The GKCFPC is a coalition of over 700 members, including individuals, businesses, government representatives, and non-profit organizations, which focuses on increasing the health of the Greater Kansas City food system. Currently, their two main initiatives are "increasing institutional purchasing of locally grown foods, and improving access to healthy, affordable food in several area food deserts" (GKCFPC N.d.). From my attendance at a number of KCHK events and GKCFPC meetings and particularly a few Food Desert Committee meetings, I know they not only have numerous connections, but they also follow through and complete their projects. For example, the GKCFPC along with CKC and others were instrumental in getting the city council of Kansas City, Missouri to update ordinances to make them more supportive of urban agriculture.

GKCFPC also works with organizations such as LISC of Greater Kansas City, Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), Society of St. Andrew-West (SOSA West), Good Natured Family Farms, and Beans and Greens on agriculture and food issues. Activities include assisting in gleaning efforts, healthy corner store initiatives, and emergency food distribution; increasing healthy food access, particularly in food deserts; and supporting urban, local, and regional gardeners and farmers. This networking involving such a variety of groups that are able to come together to work on issues they have in common (Tocqueville 1935; Putnam 1993) and to politically advocate for improved conditions (Eliasoph 2008) on agriculture and food issues is building social capital and giving voice to those in need.

Another program KCHC works on in conjunction with numerous other organizations, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is their Neighborhood Initiatives. In 2012, there were three neighborhoods, the area of Northeast Kansas City, Kansas (NE KCK), including the

Quindaro and Douglass-Sumner neighborhoods, the Rosedale neighborhood in Kansas City, Kansas, and the Ivanhoe neighborhood in Kansas City, Missouri. All three of the neighborhoods are in the urban core and are viewed as food deserts. The aims of the programs are to increase access to healthy food, promote active lifestyles, and improve the infrastructure in the communities by, for example, increasing walkability via advocating for sidewalks. The initiatives involve the neighborhood associations and employ an area resident in managing the programming. "Built on a strong community empowerment model, the Ivanhoe Healthy Kids Initiative is poised to make long-term improvements in the lives and lifestyles of thousands of neighborhood residents" (KC Healthy Kids 2013). They all have at least five gardens they are directly connected to (e.g., Rosedale has 13 and NE KCK has 15), and they are affiliated with many others. Two of the initiatives have their own farmers' markets--Rosedale and Ivanhoe--and NE KCK had farmers' markets in the area before the initiative began. They also advocate for grocery stores that provide good quality foods. Consistent with DeLind's (2002) concern that civic agricultural activities should embrace place, these initiatives are very much placed based where many of the residents are not only re-connecting with their neighbors, but also the land around them via the gardens.

CKC, Growing Growers, KCCG, KCHC, particularly with reference to their work with the Ivanhoe and Rosedale neighborhoods, and Beans and Greens were all mentioned quite often by interviewees as groups they work with or have worked with in their food growing activities. While a number of the other organizations I described were not discussed as frequently in the interviews, participant observations, news articles, or websites as these five, the connections between the groups do show how interlinked these groups are and how they support urban agricultural activities. These diverse groups connecting with such a variety of people exemplify

Granovetter's (1973) weak ties argument and Putnam's (1993) horizontal ties argument that see it as beneficial for people who are from various social locations to come together on issues that span communities and do not just focus on one particular issue for one specific group. Putnam explains horizontal ties support community collaborations and can maintain coalitions since they draw diverse people together.

By many accounts, urban agriculture in Kansas City is thriving. Appendix D, "Maps of KC Food Deserts and KC Urban Gardens and Farms," shows the areas considered food deserts and the locations of some of the gardens and farms in the area.[7] The figure on the left, Figure D.1a, "KC Food Deserts, 2010," shows areas considered food deserts based on various criteria by the USDA in their recent Food Access Research Atlas. On the map the USDA uses census tracts as their unit of analysis. I have labeled the map with zip codes to compare it to the other figure that uses zip codes. On the map the census tracts that are green are considered low income, and overall the residents have low access to supermarkets, which means "a significant number or share of individuals" live more than 1 mile from a supermarket (i.e., supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store) (USDA-ERS 2013c). Census tracts that are purple represent tracts that have low vehicle access, and "[a] tract is identified as having low vehicle availability if more than 100 households in the tract report having no vehicle available and are more than 0.5 miles from the nearest supermarket" (USDA-ERS 2013c) Census tracts that appear brown are considered low income, they have low access to supermarkets, and they have low vehicle access.

By comparing Appendix B's Figure B.1b, "Percentage of Empty or Abandoned Homes," to Figures D.1a, "KC Food Deserts, 2010," and D.1b, KC Gardens and Farms, 2012," in

[7] Not all of the gardens, farms, or farmers' markets are represented on the map. The gardens and farms on the map do not necessarily reflect the locations of the interviewees' gardens. However, as mentioned, all of the sites of the growers interviewed are in the urban core which is represented by the maps in the appendices.

Appendix D it is apparent that many of the gardens and farms are located in areas experiencing higher percentages of empty or abandoned homes and in areas deemed food deserts. In Figure B.1b of Appendix B, the darker the shades from light pink to reddish brown the higher the percentage of vacant homes. It ranges from less than 2 percent (light pink) to over 25 percent (reddish brown) of the homes considered vacant. For Figure D.1b in Appendix D, the red cross symbol represents charitable gardens, the blue flags represent community gardens, the green schools show school gardens, the blue question marks represent educational gardens, the yellow place markers show market gardens and farms, and the dollar signs represent farmers' markets. The city governments do not coordinate the gardens.

As mentioned, areas in or near the urban core are the locations where many of the zip codes have higher percentages of vacant lots. For example, as shown in Figure B.1b, in parts of zip code area 64127 (i.e, the Northeast) in Jackson County, Missouri, 25 percent or more of the homes are empty or abandoned. There are a number of gardens there, including the Urban Farming Guys' sites, the Washington Wheatley Neighborhood Garden, and the Niles Home for Children's garden. On the other hand, in further north in Kansas City, Missouri on the north side of the Missouri River in Clay County, specifically in the zip code area 64117 (i.e., the Northland), only 2 to 5 percent and 5 to 10 percent of homes are empty. A not-for-profit community development organization, Rock Solid Urban Impact, in conjunction with The Urban Farming Guys (TUFG) led by Jason Fields, aim to revitalize their blighted neighborhood through a variety of activities, including urban agriculture (Mansur 2011). Beginning in 2008, Fields along with his family and about nineteen other families moved from the suburbs into the blighted Lykins neighborhood in northeast Kansas City's 64127 zip code area (TUFG 2011). They have acquired a number of vacant lots (i.e., at least 13) (Silva 2011), cleaned them, and they have

constructed a community garden (TUFG 2011). Numerous local residents have claimed plots in the garden (TUFG 2011). Some of the families also garden at their homes.

TUFG intends to aid in decreasing the crime rate in the area by creating and maintaining opportunities for civic engagement within the neighborhood (TUFG 2011). They also plan to create jobs, educate on urban agriculture, and provide access to freshly grown foods at affordable prices to their neighbors and beyond (TUFG 2011). In addition to the community garden, they are also in the process of renovating an old elementary school they will use for community activities (TUFG 2011). Some of the other activities they are engaged in include tilapia aquaponics, raising chickens, creating jobs, and educating via media production of videos and workshops both in-person and virtual (TUFG 2011). Their media outreach goes well beyond Kansas City. For example, as a sign of their popularity, on June 30, 2013, on the social media site Facebook they have 22,218 "likes" compared to the 2,115 "likes" of Cultivate Kansas City.

In zip code areas with the medium shade of brown it is estimated that 10 to 25 percent of the homes are vacant. In Wyandotte County, zip code areas 66101, 66103 and parts of 66104 are examples. CKC's Juniper Gardens Training Farm and a community garden for those who live in the Juniper Gardens public housing complex are located in 66101. The three KCHK Neighborhood Initiatives are all located in areas where 10 to 25 percent of the homes are vacant. The Rosedale neighborhood is located in 66103, NE KCK is located in 66104, and on the Missouri side, the zip code area 64109 is where the Ivanhoe neighborhood's gardens can be found. In 64109 some areas have 5 to 10 percent of the homes vacant, but most are 10 to 25 percent vacant. Also in 64109 are the Front Porch Alliance's gardens, one of the Kansas City Urban Youth Center Gardens, and the Good Natured Market at the Harvest Learning Center (HLC) which is a grocery market located inside of a church. It is a collaborative project funded

by Good Natured Family Farms, The Kellogg Foundation, and Ball's Hen House Markets. They are able to offer low-cost items, including local items sourced through the Good Natured Family Farms network. They also participate in the Beans and Greens program which allows them to accept SNAP benefits and provide a dollar for dollar match on up to $25 each week. Figures E.1 and E.2 in Appendix E, "Census Tract Locations of Select Gardens," highlights the Rosedale neighborhood in 66103 and the Kansas City Urban Youth Center Garden located in zip code area 64109.

To the west of 64109 is URBAVORE, an urban farm in 64129 a zip code area where some places are less than 2 percent vacant while others are as high as the 10 to 25 percent range. URBAVORE is run by a married couple who previously ran BADSEED Farm (in 64108) before letting go of BADSEED due to neighbor complaints, zoning laws, and city council decisions. As Bleyer (2011) explains, in 2009, Salvaggio and Heryer added three miniature goats to their 2.5 acre farm which was located in a residential neighborhood. Soon after, due to complaints by neighbors to animal control, Salvaggio and Heryer were given a $300 fine by the city. As Bleyer (2011) explains, in the end, the goats were transported to a farm in rural Kansas until Salvaggio and Heryer retrieved them and settled them in at their new home on 13-acres. Salvaggio and Heryer successfully petitioned to have the land rezoned for agriculture instead of residential uses. The new farmstead is URBAVORE, a market farming operation serving the Kansas City area. This dilemma for the BADSEED farmers led to a citywide discussion of the urban agriculture codes that I have mentioned. Local growers and activists worked with city council members to update zoning and development codes to expand the gardening and farming activities considered legal within city limits (Kunkel 2010).

To the west and south of URBAVORE there are more gardens. For example, in 64130 is a community farm called Conception Farm, KCCG's main operation is in 64132, and Benjamin Banneker Charter Academy of Technology's garden, the Green Griots Community Garden, and Hogan Preparatory Academy High School's garden are in zip code area 64131. A large part of these areas are considered to have 10-25 percent of the homes vacant or abandoned, and they are in or near areas viewed as food deserts. The two schools are both charter schools servicing student bodies who have over 95 percent and almost 90 percent of the students receiving free and reduced lunch through the Federal government's National School Lunch Program. Their households' incomes are low enough to qualify for the program. At Hogan Prep they use their garden produce, which includes a variety of fruits and vegetables, in their school meals and students, staff, and community members also consume the produce. The garden is not only a source of nutrition and educational experiences for the students, staff, and community members, but it is also building community as neighbors and family members socialize as the enjoy the free bounty.

Food assistance organizations, such as Harvesters - the Community Food Network (in zip code 64129) on the Missouri side and Cross-Lines Community Outreach (in zip code 66105) on the Kansas side both have gardens. Harvesters is a non-profit food bank that provides food and household goods to over 620 non-profits, including food pantries, soup kitchens, and various shelters, located in 26 counties in and surrounding the greater Kansas City Area (Harvesters 2011). Cross-Lines is a non-profit organization that provides emergency assistance, hunger relief (i.e., they have a food pantry, they serve meals, provide the working poor with sack lunches, etc.), and they have a thrift store, etc. (Cross-Lines N.d.). The Cross-Lines garden began in 2006 (Glasgow 2010). Both organizations distribute the produce grown to their clients and utilize it in

their nutrition education classes (Harvesters 2011; O'Malley 2011). Cross-lines harvested 4,245 pounds of produce in 2010 (O'Malley 2011:7). Harvesters also has an initiative called Plant-a-Row for the Hungry which promotes the growing of an extra row of produce by KC growers to donate to Harvesters for distribution (Harvesters 2011).

KC Area Agrifood Policies and Programs

Between the advocates, food assistance organizations, and the growers are a variety of programs which provide opportunities to get fresh food into households, to improve health, and arguably to offer opportunities for engagement not only with community gardens but also at farmers' markets. In Kansas City, Missouri as part of the revised urban agriculture ordinances it is easier for people to grow and sell crops and to raise chickens, particularly hens, in the city limits (Kunkel 2010). Cauthon (2011) explains that Ms. Taylor-Puckett from the Kansas Rural Center (KRC) said that while in 2005 food stamps were not used at farmers markets, in 2010 of the nearly $370 million spent in food stamps in Kansas, $25,000 of it was from purchases at farmers markets. She explains that the EBT Project aides farmers markets in providing the ability to use an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card reader to allow customers to use SNAP funds to purchase fruits and vegetables via market tokens accepted by many of the vendors (Cauthon 2011). In addition, she describes the Beans and Greens program in Kansas City which provides, again in the form of a token, a matching dollar for each SNAP dollar used at participating farmers' markets (Cauthon 2011). The program is also utilized by at least one grocery store which is the HLC Market. In 2012, the match could be as high as $25 per week. The Beans and Greens program also has a mobile market, that offers, for example, local fruits, vegetables, and eggs, which services numerous lower income communities, many of which are considered food deserts. In 2012, the mobile market served eight neighborhoods in Missouri and Kansas.

There is also the Kansas Senior Farmers Market Program which, in 2010, provided vouchers to 5,700 low-income seniors to buy local produce (Cauthon 2011). Johnson, a board member of the KRC, said helping governmental aid recipients purchase products at farmers' markets may assist in decreasing health problems in Kansas (Cauthon 2011). Johnson stated, "'[l]ook at the numbers we're paying for chronic obesity in this state. Last year it was $571 million . . . [w]e have got to factor long-term health impacts into the cost'" (Cauthon 2011).

KC Urban Agriculture Participants

As discussed in chapter four, the growers and community members in Kansas City are diverse. Vegetable and fruit production is common. Volunteers often contribute to the garden work. The growers have a variety of reasons why they grow food. In many instances, they have drawn on the same resources in learning how to grow and in continuing to build their skills. There are similarities in what they find satisfying and challenging about growing food. If they do sell their produce, the most common way is through one, if not multiple, farmers' markets where the customer base is said to be branching out from being dominated by middle to upper-middle class, white people.

Growers explained the characteristics of those who consistently work in their gardens or at their farms, whether it is organizational staff members, apprentices, or volunteers. Whites and particularly younger whites were identified as being the most common staff members and apprentices, and this same group was discussed often as those who volunteer quite frequently. One market grower, a white female, explained, "I'd say it's primarily Caucasian. . . But then again we're-, because of our location [in the Midwest] lots of things are primarily Caucasian." However, there was more diversity in terms of volunteers. Many growers mentioned their volunteers were a mixture of races, classes, and ages. For example, I inquired, "Would you say

there are any general characteristics of the people that volunteer there, like in terms of race and ethnicity, age and income, anything like that?" A Hispanic American community gardener replied, "Everybody's different, we've got them all, you know, all different . . . people with money, people not, you know, all ages, you know, we have some with kids . . . ." In a number of instances it is neighborhood residents who assist in the gardens. Caucasians, African Americans, and Latinos were all mentioned. In a few cases employees from area businesses volunteer to fulfill their community service requirement, and because they enjoy it. As a couple of school growers explained, meeting service requirements is also something some of the students do when they volunteer in the gardens.

What They Produce

Seasonal vegetable production is the most common activity (tomatoes tended to be included with the vegetables). Some also grow fruit, such as berries and apples. A number of the growers put a lot of emphasis on producing heirloom varieties that cannot be found at most grocery stores in the area. By growing heirlooms, they argue, they are offering nutritional variety and crop diversity while they are filling a niche as more people are becoming interested and seeking out seasonal produce that is not offered in their grocery stores. Many growers are putting in more fruit trees and bushes as they further establish their gardens and farms. Some, such as URBAVORE Farm have enough acreage on their farmstead (e.g., around 13.5 acres) that they planted an orchard. A relatively small, but growing number of people have chickens, mostly hens, and some raise goats, fish (e.g., tilapia), and other small livestock. Other than a small garden growing a few fiber producing crops for making paper or for basketry, including flax and okra, a farmer growing a few cotton plants, and people growing small amounts of sweet corn, to my knowledge there are not any cereal plants, such as wheat or corn being grow on a large scale

in the urban core. One community garden that has around 2.5 acres is looking to use one of their city lots to grow alfalfa, wheat, and barley so they can use it to feed their chickens and goats which would reduce the number of $30 bags of food they have to purchase to feed their chickens. I did not hear of any cows or pigs being raised either.

Why They Grow Food

When questioned, growers provided a variety of reasons as to why they grow food and for whom they are growing. Some of the results are shown in the demographic tables in chapter four by how they are classified into groups based roughly on their main growing objective. Through discussions, I learned their reasons are more multi-faceted. The three main themes revolve around concerns for better nutrition; connecting with nature, food, and/or people; and being of service to others by providing them with food. Another reason that was mentioned by some people was providing an environment where people, particularly teenagers and younger children, can learn about food production and, in some cases, build entrepreneurial skills.

An African American woman who runs educational programming involving the growing of food in community gardens also grows at home. She explained that she first started growing food to save money and to provide better nutrition for her family. I asked why she decided to garden and she replied:

> To supplement my family's income for one thing and the other thing is, two of my children, um, have asthma and, um, and I started researching and finding out that there's more and more additives put in our food, and I was curious if I started growing my own to see if I would see a difference in my kids health as well as mine. . . . And, um, I definitely have seen a difference. . . . they tend to like the fresher food better, they definitely can taste the difference between store bought and fresh foods. So that was the main reason.

A white female school gardener explained, "[w]e needed organic vegetables in the building and we just couldn't afford it. The school couldn't." She explained the even with the Federal funding from the National School Lunch program that "by time you pay off kitchen staff, um, pay off the utilities, pay off operational costs, it leaves you about a dollar to actually purchase food per kid . . . . You're not buying organic salad greens with a dollar per kid."

When asked why she grows food another school gardener, a Caucasian in her 40s, explained that in addition to being able to "link growing food with . . . academic curriculum," she spoke of the benefits of connections. She explains, "I would say, you know, in terms of the project that I'm working on . . . Well, because I want to know where it comes from. I think . . . there's also something about gardening that engages me with the earth and the dirt that's very grounding. . . . And so part of it is just the physical activity that's involved and food is a-, is a-, I want to say a bonus, it's a-, it's like a perfect outcome. . . . It's like a perfect match." Consistent with DeLind (2002), connecting to students, nature, and place are important to this grower.

A charitable grower, a white male in his 60s, who oversees a small garden at his church explained that as a part of the health services they were already providing, including a free clinic providing medical care and serving meals to homeless people, they decided to utilize more healthy foods in their meals; and they decided to grow some of it themselves. They also are active with other organizations such as a group that gleans farmers' fields for the leftovers after harvest, and they receive food from local food banks as well. Some people who use their services have assisted with the garden at times. He also explained that people walk by and see food growing on the side of the city street, and they are curious. He said they are about to expand their garden to a larger plot. He explained that from their initial idea of getting more fresh foods into the meals they serve that, "[i]t has turned into a community project . . . meaning that it's not just

sharing our vegetables or what I glean . . . it is the sharing with other kitchens and other food pantries. So it's become-, it turned into a community project and that's-, that's [the] primary reason that I do it." As Lyson (2004) and Allen (1999) argue, when people get more involved in thinking about food and their consumption of it they may get more involved in other related activities. For this gentleman and his church group they started with an idea and it led to seeing the benefits of connecting and sharing with other groups not only the food, but also the knowledge they were acquiring, such as learning they could get free fresh food via gleaning. Along the way they are building connections and social capital (Putnam 1993) as they increase the fruits and vegetables they include in the meals they serve to the homeless.

In a part of the city without a grocery store nearby (i.e., in a food desert), an African American woman in her 30s who runs a community garden, that also has an entrepreneurial program attached to it in the summer for teenagers, explained how the garden began in a vacant lot next door to their office:

> Well, the land stayed vacant for four years and then it was, um, [there was] such a push for urban gardening and farming and that sort of thing and creating community gardens that we decided to, uh, grow a garden next door. We were just thinking about a small garden . . . in the beginning, but then when I started thinking about the possibilities of, uh, creating an opportunity for our summer program kids, who we teach how to start their own, uh, business . . . I felt that if they had more land to grow on then they could produce more varieties of vegetables and ultimately sell more product. So it kind of all started as a small idea and then created-, went into a big idea [laughs].

In 2009, they started with a 10,000 square foot garden growing a variety of seasonal vegetables and herbs. She said they add a new crop each year. Recently they have added "apple, cherry, pear, . . . and peach" trees. Of the 20 to 30 teenagers who participate in the summer program, she explained that some of them enjoy the physical gardening part while others do not, but they will do the work. Most of them enjoy tasting the food they grow, and she explains, "I think we have

opened their palates, and uh, opened their minds to at least tasting . . . the vegetables." Most of the teenagers enjoy selling their produce at the market and seeing how much they can earn. Granovetter's (1973) discussion of the embeddedness of economic transactions comes to mind. These teenagers are selling their produce at a market in their neighborhood, and they encourage their neighbors and friends to support them by purchasing their products. She explained that by the time they have enough produce to harvest and sell at the market then the kids "get really excited. . . . And now it's not so much of a chore or work to go out there and . . . work in the garden, because now they see the purpose of it. Because they have people who want their produce and that sort of thing, and so they get excited [laughter]." They are not just selling solely to anonymous people, rather they are often selling to people they are connected to.

When questioned, growers explained how they learned to grow food. Of the 27 growers, 1 has a horticultural degree. Most of the others learned through their families, from other farmers and gardeners, through workshops and apprenticeships, and through trial and error. A few mentioned the Internet as a source for information on how to grow food. KCCG and CKC were specifically mentioned quite frequently as assisting the growers in learning. The African American community gardener from the above discussion explained how she learned: "I've gone to several workshops offered, uh, in the city . . . at [Kansas City] Community Gardens, uh, their workshops, I've read books, I have books, [the] Internet, and then, uh, wise stories from old people [both laugh]." Similarly, an educational grower, a white male, explained the wealth of knowledge that some nearby senior citizens have about growing food: "what I've found is that there is a treasure trove of old farmers and gardeners there. . . . the amount of just knowledge they have there is incredible. . . . I mean really spending time with them to me would be the

equivalent of enrolling in a second degree, you know [laughing].” One grower said from growing up on a farm, he learned what not to do:

> Well, I learned a lot as a kid on the farm, but most of that learning was reverse learning. I learned what not to do. [Laughter] . . . not to use chemicals. . . . But when I grew up using chemicals was-, it was just what you did. No one knew any different. Well, some people did. There was a little magazine called *Organic Grower* back in the 50s. It was a little leaflet like magazine. I got a subscription to that and tried to make my old man read it and he never would. . . . But everyone got on that chemical thing. You know, it-, there was malathion, DDT all that really bad shit. I mean it’s horrible [chuckles] stuff. . . . But it was just used willy-nilly. It was what you did.

Overall the growers find it satisfying to grow their own food, to know where it is coming from, and to know that it is organic. There is a general fascination with the growing process. The growers not only get excited themselves when they are able to harvest and see their accomplishments, but they also enjoy seeing others--young, old, new, and experienced--get excited about it as well. As is common, a school gardener, a white female in her 30s, described how satisfying it is to help educate the children and watch them get excited about it. We had the following dialogue:

> Me: So, what do you find most satisfying about gardening?
> School Gardener: Just the-, the kids.
> Me: The kids.
> School Gardener: Just how much the kids, how much it has opened up-, the experiences it gives them, um, how much they’re eating. The raspberries-, we had a really early raspberry bush like back in June and some of the freshman were in here and they were like, ‘can we help?’ I’m like, ‘sure, come on, let’s go. Let’s go outside. Come on, come see the garden,’ you know. And there were no big kids so they weren’t intimidated. And, um, they were like, ‘what are these?’ and it was a raspberry-, the raspberry bed.
> Me: Uh, huh.
> School Gardener: I’m like ‘they’re raspberries,’ they’re like, ‘really, can we eat ‘em?’ I’m like, ‘yeah.’ And I had kind of hosed them off and I’m like, ‘eat it.’ And they’re like, ‘this tastes better than raspberry candy.’
> Me: Oh [laughs].

> School Gardener: 'Yeah, guys that's right.' 'These are really good!' 'Yeah.' 'Why's it not blue?' 'Because raspberry candy, I don't know why they make it blue guys.' So it was really cute,
> Me: Yeah.
> School Gardener: we had this dialogue about it. . . . It's awesome.
> Me: Mm-hmm.
> School Gardener: I mean organic raspberries. Do you know how much organic raspberries cost?
> Me: Yeah, they're pricey.
> School Gardener: My babies aren't getting organic raspberries.
> Me: I'm not either! [Both laugh].
> School Gardener: So, um, the kids-, for the kids to go out there and taste it . . . it's awesome.

An educational grower, a white female in her 30s, touched on a variety of the themes that many of the growers discussed as to what they find most satisfying. She was explaining how she had never grown potatoes before and she was harvesting them for the first time with fifth graders. They were excited about the process:

> I was working with this 5th grader and we like dug 'em up [that] day and they were just getting so excited because you're like digging through the dirt and getting all these potatoes. And like I said to one of the 5th graders out there, 'this is so cool.' [laughter]. And he was trying to be like really cool for his friends and he was like, [quietly] 'this is really cool' [laughter] . . . I mean I just think it's really cool to see them get really excited about like growing their own food, because, I don't know, it's just miraculous that you can just plant a little tiny seed and grow something that you can eat later on . . . .

A community gardener, a white female in her 30s, who works with low-income growers explained what she finds most satisfying about gardening: "I think the pride and ownership that people have in growing their own produce is one of the most exciting things, especially new growers and old growers they're so proud of what they grow. And it makes eating it a lot more exciting . . . when you grow it yourself." Other growers mentioned they like how growing food allows them to not only be outside connecting with nature, but also to connect with others. A community gardener, a white male in his 20s, who produces food in a poverty ridden area

expressed, "mainly the connections . . . it's, uh, easy to connect with people about eating together, working together, and the idea of that, the beauty that it brings in, and people seem to come together around that stuff a lot easier than other things in the world." Producing food is something that people from all backgrounds can connect to; and by working together people can connect, and they can find common ground. They may not be creating formal associations in the Tocquevillian sense, but following Bellah et al. and Putnam, they are participating in civil society, participating in a community building activity, and this foundation, this building up of social capital, could be beneficial for them and their communities in the future.

Maintenance of the gardens/farms, including the physical labor requirements and having enough people and time to keep up with the tasks was the main challenge growers said they face. Weather and issues with water access and the amount of time it takes to water were the two other main challenges growers said they have. A community gardener, a white female in her 30s, who works with a number of community gardens explained that "probably the biggest challenge that we see is follow through. There's lots of people that get excited about growing food and do a good job of it for a couple months, but either get worn out or too busy or it gets hot and they give up." She explained that it is important that the gardens are not so big that people feel overwhelmed. Many of the growers explained their challenges with watering their gardens. For some the challenge is access to water in the first place. Some growers string hoses from a water spigot across the street to their gardens. Others mentioned paying for the water is a challenge. This community gardener discussed the challenge of water access. She explained, "I would say that [water] access can be an issue, however the-, access in the sense of making it affordable is probably the biggest issue."

A coalition called H_2O to Grow has been working for almost two years with government officials in Wyandotte County with the aim of devising ways to make access to water more affordable to those who are growing or who want to grow food to increase the availability of fresh food in their areas. In June of 2013, the coalition announced a pilot project that has $50,000 available to provide grants to eligible groups to have water taps installed at their garden plots. It is a competitive process. There are a variety of criteria that must be met to be eligible, including having to be at least 10,000 square feet in size and either being a non-profit organization or having one as a sponsor. The fact that growers, advocates, and officials of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas (UG) have created this opportunity to support urban agriculturalists shows how civic participation (Bellah et al. 1996 [1985]), diverse people uniting around a common theme (Tocqueville 1835; Granovetter 1973; Putnam 1993), and then advocating for and manifesting a social program that seeks to benefit civil society (Somers 2008) is likely to help a broader constituency than if just one community garden received a grant to put in a water spigot at their site. Instead, with this community plan the H_2O to Grow coalition is advocating that one way to improve the health in their community is by supporting urban gardens, particularly those who also aim to reduce water run-off. In their applications, applicants have to address issues, including, for example, having an operations plan, having water and soil conservation strategies, aiming to beautify the area, and explaining how they will engage the community. Growing food in a food desert is viewed as a strength in one's application. On the UG's website, they offer tips on how to write a strong application and who they can contact for assistance. In addition, the coalition is offering a workshop to assist with the application process. This sharing of knowledge and providing contacts helps build social capital and extend one's networks (Putnam 1993). Consistent with Allen (2004) and

Hendrickson (2009), by urban agricultural participants working in these types of coalitions and by being a part of defining policies and programs, they can help shape the discourse around urban agriculture.

Customers and Recipients

Most of the ten growers who sell do so at farmers' markets. In 2012, there were around 50 farmers' markets operating somewhere in the city 7 days a week. Therefore, depending on how much time they want to spend at market and the distance they are willing to travel they have a number of opportunities to sell. However, as I learned from reading e-mail messages on the K-State Growers listserv and from talking with people, with so many markets there is the argument that it is just spreading out the customer base, and it is not necessarily helping the growers' incomes. Some sell through CSAs. An increasing number also sell to local restaurants. As mentioned, Hinrichs (2003), Slocum (2007), Guthman (2008), and Alkon (2008) describe the typical agrifood participants as being middle class and upper-middle class whites. While many of the growers I talked to often cite these groups as being their main customers, many of them also said their customer base has been becoming more diverse with lower income people and more people of color purchasing their products. For example one market grower who sells at two of the larger organic markets in the city explained how their customer base is changing:

> I would say it's actually gotten pretty diverse, especially this year; now that we're doubling food stamps . . . we're seeing a lot more diversity in the market as far as race, ethnicity, and income levels. Um, and-, and we get a lot of young people in here. I'd say when I first started [in 2006] it was a lot of like middle-class, middle-aged individuals, you know, people who knew it was good to eat healthy and, uh, had the income for organic food. But that's really kind of-, kind of morphed. But I would say . . . that still dominates.

Six growers also mentioned young families and older people as frequently being their customers. A few growers who sell at smaller markets in their neighborhoods tend to be largely supported by the residents, including African Americans and Latinos. In some cases it includes low-income people utilizing the matching SNAP funds through the Beans and Greens program. In addition to the mobile markets, one grower makes home deliveries to people, particularly elderly people, who are challenged in getting to a grocery store. The 17 growers who use the produce in their own programs and who donate produce often mentioned the recipients as neighborhood residents, lower income people, and people of color.

Community: People, Locales, and Communities of Practice

Although some of the gardens and farms in Kansas City in general have been in existence since the early 2000s, with some beginning before that time, many have begun in 2007 or later. For the interviewees, the average year that operations began was 2008. The longer the length of time that a garden/farm has been in existence does not necessarily mean that it is more integrated into the surrounding locale. Resembling some of our BACC: FLUD interview questions, I asked all of the growers to discuss their communities. As a part of this, we also discussed which groups they are involved with in relation to their gardens/farms and what makes them want to continue to associate with those groups. While many of the growers immediately began discussing the locale where their garden is located and the people there, a few others, particularly five market growers discussed their communities more so in terms of other growers and their customers at market.

In describing the community related to their garden, a school grower, a white female in her 30s, said the following:

> Um, well the whole-, anybody who comes to [the school], parents, grandparents, anybody. The kids' parents, the kids' sisters, siblings, anybody, the kids, whoever [ ] wants to take food home from the garden they can. The garden-, the gate is open to them whenever they want, they can call, a kid can come in here and be like, 'hey, my mom's on the way to pick me up, I'm gonna take some greens'. You know, whatever, it's open to anybody.

A charitable grower, a white male in his 60s, explains the reach of their community:

> So our-, our community is our local[e] meaning our people that come to our church and it's the homeless population, it's the community downtown, it's the people that live and work downtown. . . . So that's the local community, but it's larger than that. . . . It's, um, the larger community can be the suburban . . . and it's reaching out further, farther than that. I mean the reason I say suburban is because we have a lot of people that have interests in what we're doing downtown . . . with our programs, with our homeless population.

An educational grower in a food desert, an African American in her 40s, explains the community associated with her organization and the gardening activities they do, including offering workshops and trainings, expands beyond their immediate neighborhood:

> the community is the almost 8000 residents here in [neighborhood]. Um, but also it's our neighbors in [neighborhood] and [neighborhood] and, um, [neighborhood], because we're all touching. . . . And we have quite a bit of crossover from other communities. [They] come here for training, the classes. Community is who we are.

She went on to explain she likes the resiliency of her community, and that "this community has been through hell." She provided the following example:

> Um, an example would be, [that] at one point it was the highest crime area in Kansas City. Um, history here, we have information that shows that in, since 2010, 600 drug houses have closed. . . . you have [the highway] that splits the neighborhood, they built it. So you have the effects of pollution, you have noise, you have, you know, all of that. Um, this place community, you have, uh, abandoned homes. You have no businesses here. You know, but yet there are people here who refuse to leave, and they see a brighter tomorrow. They see the possibilities of this neighborhood, and that is so encouraging to me.

She said there used to be businesses in her area, but now there is only one restaurant left. She and those she talks about are very much attached to their community and their "place community" as she mentions. This is consistent with DeLind's (2002) insistence on paying attention to place when we talk about building connections through civic agriculture.

A few market growers specifically mentioned their community as other growers. A few others mentioned both their neighborhoods where their gardens or farms are located and the growers and customers at the farmers' markets where they sell their products. A market grower, a white female, explained what comes to mind when she thinks of community:

> I think of a collection of growers with a bunch of different, um, areas of expertise or levels of knowledge, and I think of a lot of people that are really, really, really happy to talk about what they know and to ask questions and to share that knowledge. . . . Um, but I also think of a really, really, really excited base of interested customers that are excited to have a connection to their food via knowing their farmer . . . and supporting their farmer.

This is an example of communities of practice as Carolan (2011) explains the concept. In looking at how to build the capacity of local food production, Carolan (2011) spoke with small-scale growers who mentioned things such as "'community,'" uniting farmers, and "'building relationships'" (p. 131). He then discusses how this makes him think of the concept of communities of practice where people come together around activities they engage in, and they share knowledge while they do it. Carolan states, "[r]esearch into these communities reveals the importance they play in the exchange of otherwise 'sticky' knowledge--knowledge that can only be acquired through practice" (2011:131). By working in these communities, participating civically (Bellah et al. [1985] 1996) with other growers and in these producer and consumer relationships (Lyson 2004), with people of varying socioeconomic statuses in some instances, these connections bring diverse people into contact forming, in Granovetter's (1973) terms, weak

ties. These growers, and possibly the consumers, are building social capital (Putnam 1993), which is building civic community (Tolbert et al. 2002) and civil society. As growers and consumers feel more connected to these local interactions, as Lyson (2004) and Allen (1999) would argue, they could desire to seek connections beyond their locales and become more curious about agrifood activities on larger scales. They could become food citizens (Lyson 2004). Through this process people may begin to find their voices (Eliasoph 1998). They may see the benefits of vocalizing how their local concerns with food are linked to larger levels, to the national level, and to concerns about the unfairness of the agrifood system.

While in my interviews, market growers were the most likely to first speak of their communities in terms of other growers, or following Carolan, in terms of their communities of practice, it is not just the market growers who spoke excitedly about networking and sharing knowledge with others involved in food production. For example, numerous growers mentioned how they freely share information and resources with each other. As one community member, an African American in her 40s, mentioned, "knowledge is power." Increasing one's knowledge helps them to increase their power (Allen 2004). As Bell (2004) mentions knowledge and power are also tied to identity and here, the more people increase their knowledge and their skills they may be more likely to feel more strength in their identity as a gardener or farmer. I know some growers I spoke with were proud to call themselves farmers. They feel a bond with other farmers, and they enjoy those connections. In addition, when gardening activities are public, the fact that plants and produce are tangible goods, that people can readily see and touch, helps give the growers props they can use when they discuss their food issues. This is consistent with Eliasoph's (1998) call for people to not only be more involved civically, but also to be able to speak in public about their concerns. Food and gardens assist people in having more of a public

voice. Numerous growers discussed how they have had visitors to their gardens, including governmental officials, and they are able to talk with them about the gardening activities. This gives them the opportunities to speak about larger concerns they have about gardens/farms, food, and health. For example, as part of CKC's Urban Farms and Garden Tour in 2011 and 2013, the GKCFPC hosted a policy makers' tour where they loaded up a bus with governmental employees and took them on a tour of some of the gardens and farms in Kansas City. This allowed them to highlight their concerns with food related issues.

By sharing knowledge and tools, they see the benefits of engaging in reciprocity, whether it is balanced or generalized (Putnam 1993). That is, whether they engage in even exchanges, such as trading tools, or whether they provide a service, such as tilling a fellow grower's garden in the spring, without immediately receiving something in return, but believing that grower will repay the favor at some point. In addition to the numerous people who spoke of Katherine Kelly from CKC as being foundational to the establishment and continued success of their gardens, three growers specifically mentioned another grower by name who helped them start their gardens and who they regard as a wonderful and continual source of information. Others named each others' workshops as being helpful. I already discussed the numerous organizations in addition to KCCG and CKC that were mentioned by many growers as being groups they turn to for assistance. While visiting numerous garden sites I saw borrowed tools, including a wheelbarrow, which had KCCG initials on it. In addition, several growers spoke of how happy they are to be a part of the up-coming biennial Urban Farms and Gardens Tour hosted by CKC. A school gardener, an African American in her 40s, explained, "we do the, um, Cultivate Kansas City tour, and that's wonderful because it allows others to come see our school, get acquainted

with our neighborhood." She returned to speaking about it again while talking about the food movement in Kansas City:

> . . . The Urban Garden Tour is fabulous, that's only every other year . . . And so, um, it's wonderful, but I think it's just at its beginning stages. Which might be encouraging because it-, it's at its beginning stages, and it's doing so well, then what's going to happen in five years and in ten years? . . . And my hope is that it will be around 5 years, it will be around 10 years, it will be around 20 years.

While discussing the organizations they are involved with in relation to their garden a community gardener, an African American in her 30s, who also runs an educational component for teenagers explained that in 2011 they were invited by CKC to participate in the 2011 Urban Farm and Gardens Tour, and "that was really fun" and they "look forward to continu[ing] to participate in that organization as well, which I think is Cultivate Kansas City's deal. [laughter]."

A common answer as to why growers want to continue their associations with groups they currently work with was stated by the African American community gardener mentioned above. She explained, "[b]ecause they offer support, education, and networking opportunities." In addition to the numerous organizations and people mentioned throughout the interviews, the growers referenced over 54 different organizations they are involved with in relation to their gardens/farms. The organizations ranged from schools to businesses and from non-profit organizations to departments in city governments. Examples include the following: The Black Health Care Coalition, Latino Health for All, Catholic Charities, State Farm, and the Kansas City Health Department. An educational grower in a food desert, an African American in her 40s, explained what makes her want to stay involved with the groups that she has been working with as she runs her neighborhood health and wellness program:

> I see potential, I see possibilities. I really, you know, the catch phrase word of sustainability, but I really think that is so important for this neighborhood to continue. Um, you know, we were supposed to get a grocery store six years ago.

> . . . And people are discouraged, but that's not that unusual in these type of neighborhoods, especially when you're dealing with programming and grants and funding. The money doesn't always come through, so if the residents-, if you can lay a solid foundation of, you can do this, you can do this for yourself, you can continue to thrive, you don't necessarily have to be at the mercy of government or funding or whatever. You can make this happen. And that's what I see with gardening. And that's why it was important that it was just not about, you know, getting good food, but also realizing that these can be businesses, you can be a business person. And that's been one of the most exciting . . . things . . .

She went on to explain that a couple of residents in her neighborhood not only started gardens on their own property, but they also have their business licenses and are selling to their neighbors. A school garden coordinator explained she continues to work with groups because they "do what they say they're going to do." She named Whole Foods Market, KCCG, local professional athletes who promote healthy living and explained that

> those kinds of partnerships help to extend our curriculum and make a well rounded child, so as long as it's a partner that going to meet our mission of building a well-rounded child that's, uh, healthy and happy and well adjusted, you know meets our service-, meets our leadership service [expectations] . . . and those kinds of things, then we'll keep partnering with them.

The growers see how working with other groups who have similar missions provides opportunities to expand their connections (i.e., build social capital), to learn new knowledge or expand on what they already know, and to overall strengthen their own efforts towards reaching their goals.

Levels of Support and Impacts of Urban Agriculture

Although they may not describe it in the same terms, all of the interviewees view urban agriculture positively. A few did mention that not everyone agrees. Almost all of the interviewees feel support has increased from community residents; area businesses, such as some

restaurants, hardware stores, and hospitals; and some government officials. Most said urban agriculture impacts their communities and the city in beneficial ways.

The definitions of urban agriculture interviewees provided did not vary widely. Many growers said it is growing food or growing produce in a city. Some included suburban areas. A few see scale differences between urban agriculture and gardening and what makes them different is that with urban agriculture growers are producing at a scale that they can distribute product to others. A few were uncomfortable using the term agriculture related to the small-scale gardening they felt they were involved in, whether that was a 10,000 square foot plot or a community garden on an acre. A community gardener discussed how they do not normally use the word agriculture:

> I think to most people agriculture seems like a more intimidating word. . . . Um, it connotes farming on a larger scale or that it's going to be your, um, full-time job . . . when we talk to kids, we say this all time, that you could grow up and be a banker, you could grow up and work at Wal-Mart, you could grow up and be an astronaut, and have a garden. I mean anybody can be a gardener. . . . Um, you can find a space to grow some food for your family that's healthy and lower cost . . . not everyone's going to be-, feel the call to go be a farmer. . . . And so I think, yeah, the agriculture word maybe just is-, is too big and committed. . . . there's people that want to do that and we would say go for it, but for most people I think gardening is something you can get your hands [chuckles] around a little bit easier.

Beyond these viewpoints, a few of the growers were more philosophical about how they described urban agriculture. For example, a school gardener, an African American in her 40s, explained how she sees it:

> I just believe that urban agriculture is, um, uh, urban dwellers' way of combating, um, the over-processed, uh, food supply that we've been given for the last 20, 30, 40 years. Um, I think people have been very, uh, creative in terms of trying to live a healthier, pesticide-free lifestyle, um, I think it, uh, is, um, our way of giving back to our community healthy food items, um. I think it is our way of combating the very pricey, um, uh, organic food onslaught that we've been given here. . . . I

> don't think a lot of people would have an argument against the fact that they would like to eat organic, but eating organic, it's very expensive.

Not surprisingly, the first thing many interviewees discussed when talking about what urban agriculture is aiming to accomplish is providing food. For example, a school gardener, a white female in her 30s, who is also uncomfortable using the term agriculture, explained what she thinks growing food in the city is trying to accomplish:

> Um, for the most part I think it's trying to fill the need. . . . the economy being the downturn that it is, people know they need to eat more vegetables. Number one, sometimes it's inconvenient to get to a grocery, especially since so many of us use public transit. . . . You try carrying home, you know, potatoes, lettuce, all this . . . strawberries are mush by the time you get home. It's ridiculous trying to bring in produce on the Metro [the public city bus] or on your bike or whatever home. And so many, especially of our, our families, heck some of my friends, you don't have a car, so this ag-, this agriculture [laughter], you know, you have, it's out of necessity. . . . You're broke . . . so even if you do have a car, um, you have to-, you still have to pay for the produce, which is so much cheaper just to grow it on your own.

She went on the explain the benefits of growing one's own food, such as knowing that it was not grown with pesticides that may contain obesogens. She said there are some people that grow food because they think gardening is fun, but for most people in the urban core it is out of necessity. She expressed, "[s]o in the urban core they're doing it out of need, out of survival for a lot of people, especially if you have kids and you know they need the fruit and vegetables. It's more of, uh, survival." An educational grower, a white male in his 20s, added the additional aim of re-connecting with nature. He explained, "[r]eally it's about re-connecting people back to the earth. Um, making good food easily available and cheap . . . ." He talked about how the kids he works with are really responding well to the gardening activities, the work, and eating the fresh foods. He, and a few of the others, made remarks to the effect that he thinks the kids are increasingly appreciating the fresh foods. He expressed, "[y]ou know, it's really gotten to the

point where I fully believe I could have a candy bar and I could have a peach and about a third of my kids would take a peach." Another educational grower, an African American in her 40s, who works with kids in the urban core explained:

> I think most cases the bottom line is, they're trying to again be empowered and in control of some of their own sources of food or other products, you know. And, you know, be more economical in doing so. . . . Um, it costs money to grow, but . . . probably over time . . . growing averages out to be a cheaper prospect than going to the grocery store and buying everything you need.

Providing food was not the only thing interviewees discussed when they talked about what urban agriculture is aiming to accomplish. When asked, a market grower, a white female, replied, "well community, improved access to healthy foods." A community gardener who also runs an educational program, an African American in her 30s, remarked, "[y]es, feeding families and creating healthy communities I would hope. And getting people back to working on projects as a community. So building community, not only feeding the community, but building the community." She, like Lyson (2004) and Allen (1999) see community gardening as a way to build community and encourage people to work together on other community issues. This social gardening can be a way for people to join together (Toqueville 1935), to participate in civic activities, to build community, and to enhance civil society (Bellah et al. [1985] 1996; Putnam 1993; Tolbert et al. 1998; Tolbert et al. 2002). A community member, a white male in his 60s, brought all of the main themes together as to what urban agriculture is aiming to accomplish:

> Well, I think urban agriculture is-, is aiming to accomplish many things. One, it's a source of income for many of our residents, uh, in some cases there, uh, it's their full-time employment. I think, uh, secondly, it provides, uh, a more nutritious, uh, tastier foods that are grown locally and, uh, um, not picked early and shipped halfway across the country, um, at a reasonable price. I-, I think it does also, uh, facilitate the reuse of vacant land and many, uh, vacant lots that have grown nothing but weeds and trash, uh, to be used as community gardens, uh, to provide fresh, healthy, tasty, nutritious food . . . for reasonable prices, um, particularly in some of the food deserts in the city.

With urban agriculture access to fresh, nutritious food is being increased, civic engagement is occurring, income and employment opportunities are being created, and vacant land is being cleared of debris and weeds and being utilized by communities.

Overall, interviewees feel urban agriculture is doing well meeting the goals of increasing access to fresh, healthy foods. An educational grower, an African American in her 40s, explained that urban agriculture is not new in Kansas City and that it has been brought into the spotlight in part by the work of Michelle Obama with the White House garden and the Let's Move campaign. She explained:

> Well, it's been around a long time. . . . there's been people in the neighborhoods that's been doing this a long time. . . . Sasteh Mosley, Sasteh's been urban farming for years. Um, Sherri Harvel . . . Sherri was like one of the first female African American urban farmers, but it wasn't called that. . . . She was a gardener . . . Obama has kind of brought this front and center, so now it's sheik, it's hip, it's cute. . . . which has kind of opened the door to funding . . . because of that we were able to fund [our] project. Um, so I worry that, you know, it's a wave we're all riding high now . . . and it's like when it crashes, what's gonna happen? So I-, I am kind of worried about that, and that's why it's so important that we continue with these classes to empower the people that you don't have to have all of that, you can do this.

For her and their project it is not just about a few people gardening and benefiting from the garden, but they are working to spread the knowledge, empower their residents with gardening skills and nutritional education so that they can continue to have access to fresh foods even if the program is no longer funded. A white male grower in his 20s enthusiastically responded to the question: "How well do you think urban agriculture is doing in meeting its goals?" He explained:

> I think really well, . . . I mean you look [at] the expansion . . . um, how many new farms are popping up, you look at the number of people who are dedicating their whole lives to this and are really happy doing it. . . . I mean it's a very satisfying choice to make. And I mean, and the community I've met of people, they're very self satisfied, and they're very capable and they're very, very intelligent. And you

> know, that attracts more folk [laughter]. It's like, I had a potluck last night and it was full of urban farmers and artists and it's just a beautiful, thriving, vibrant community. And it's getting bigger, like, I watch it get bigger by the week, so I think it's doing very, very well. And it's very much about outreach, so it's always trying to break into new communities.

However, in response to this question, a few interviewees, particularly market growers discussed the difficulties of supporting a livelihood as an urban farmer. For example, a market grower, a white female, remarked:

> You know. How well is it doing? I think it's doing okay, I think there's, like I said, a growing awareness. Um, can farmers easily pay their bills? No. You know, and until it becomes a viable source of income, almost every farmer I know has another source of income as well. That's really tough, that's like a pretty disheartening-, disheartening thing. It's not easy to-, to farm and then also to hold another job down.

A community member, an African American male in his 60s, said urban agriculture in Kansas City is not meeting its goals. He explained:

> No, because they're not dealing with people. Um, the, uh, the majority of the people who are engaged in the-, the urban agriculture are white. . . . You'll have maybe, a, a very small percentage, not even one percent that will be black. Uh, those that are black that are engaged in it are doing [it] for being sold on the fact that they can make money. . . . Um, and so their-, their objectives are different. They're not really trying to-, to educate people, in fact they don't have very much to do with people and that's all of them across the board. They-, they'll go into a community, they'll put in a garden and then they expect people in that community to come and participate with them out at that garden and that's kind of what's going on out there. And-, and there's not very much participation coming from the people who live around them. So if you ask me how we're doing, I think we're still on square one and the realization of where we go from here has yet to be, uh, discovered or seen or taught. One of those three words. [Both laugh.]

From his experience white people are the primary participants in urban agriculture in Kansas City, and they have an expectation that when they go into a minority community, such as a community that is predominantly black, that those residents will get involved and help support their mission. This is not necessarily what happens. For him, while some residents view food

production as a way to generate income, they are not necessarily aiming to provide environmental or nutrition education, for example.

In terms of community support for urban agriculture, interviewees often mentioned increasing numbers of people attending their gardening workshops, participating in the gardens, or shopping at their farmers' markets. A school gardener, a white male in his 20s, whose garden has the backing of the school and support from the neighborhood association where the garden is located said he thinks community residents are supporting urban agriculture. He explained, "[y]eah, they do, especially here. And even in, what might be considered more conservative communities, like suburbs, I think it's actually very supported there. There's something about food that really draws across many lines, so racial, income, religious lines, food kind of draws us all together. So, yeah, I think so." Granovetter's weak ties and Putnam's horizontal ties arguments are supported by this gardener's statements about how food can draw people from different backgrounds together. Going back to the critique above that going into a community and starting a garden does not mean people will support it, a market grower who farms in a neighborhood location where she does not live explained that while she thinks communities are supporting it that you have to make sure and be respectful to the community. She stated:

> Yes, absolutely [they support it], but I do see how personality plays into because you have to be very respectful that this is where your neighbors live and you may be a business and they may not want any business near where they live. So that piece of neighborly respect and feeling like you are part of the community is important.

A community gardener in a low-income area, a white female in her 30s, explained she thinks a lot of residents support gardening, but "I don't know that very many of them would join a CSA or would buy from a farmers' market." She talked generally about the neighborhood, which includes elderly African Americans, and how some low-income people in her area see growing

one's own food as a way to lower their bills while consuming fresh produce. They are not necessarily trying to be a part of any type of movement, whether it is a local foods movement, an organic foods movement, or both. She explained, "Um, this idea of, you know, how many calories it took to fly something on an airplane or whatever is probably foreign to most people in our community, and their goal is to just try and get something healthy to eat." Additionally a market grower, a white male, explained that the neighbors around his garden like to talk with him about his garden, and they support it being there; but they do not buy his produce. He expressed: "I have my community here . . . that I live in and not one of them goes to the-, to the, uh, [ ] Market. Not one. Well, maybe every now and then. . . . But very-, very seldom. Not regularly. You know support is regular."

Consistent with a number of the interviewees, a community gardener, a white female in her 30s, said in some areas of the city there is a more organized effort of growers working together and that overall in terms of successes with maintaining gardens she explained, "[s]o, I think we're winning some [laughing] and losing some probably." Similarly, an educational grower in Kansas City, Kansas, an African American in her 40s, expressed that in some parts of the city urban agriculture is thriving, but in other parts it is not as developed. She discussed her experience:

> It depends on where you are. . . . You know, it's a regional thing. Some areas are on fire with it and they're doing very well. I don't know how familiar you are with some of the areas on the Missouri side--Ivanhoe and some of those other folks like that, I think they're doing a really excellent job, but because they've kind of come together, started working together more to get things done. . . . You know, they've started a tilapia farming place over there . . . some other things that. And so they're taking off, and they [are] gonna start really benefitting the residents. Our area is quite a bit behind on that, um, front. There's no central coalition, you know, 'every man kind of for [themselves'], but you know there's an association in that. You can still go to different ones and say 'hey you know this is what I have going on, what do you know about it or can-, I need tilling or I

> need, you know, . . . there's some cooperation there. It's just not as good as it can be yet.

From her point of view, even though in her area the urban agriculture community is not as strong as it is in other neighborhoods in Kansas City, she still feels a connection with the other growers, and they feel comfortable asking each other for assistance. Connections are being built and social capital is being created. In her example she referred to the Ivanhoe KC Healthy Kids Initiative and probably The Urban Farming Guys when she mentioned tilapia farming. Although The Urban Farming Guys are not the only ones in the city raising tilapia, they are the most well known at this point.

Discussions of support being provided by businesses ranged from growers being given discounts or receiving donations from local businesses to restaurants purchasing their produce to use in the meals they serve. Employee groups from various nearby businesses were named as being volunteers at a number of gardens/farms. A community member, a white female in her 20s, discussed the extent to which businesses support urban agriculture:

> Yeah, to a certain extent [they do]. I mean, the farmers' market is a business, but other than that the businesses around [the neighborhood] have let us put up posters for the farmers' market. [The hardware store] has been really, really awesome with donating, um, transplants and giving us discounts on gardening supplies and things like that.

Others mentioned how groups of employees from various companies participate in CSAs with urban growers, and they volunteer with different gardens and farms. An educational grower, an African American in her 40s, explained, "I think a lot of businesses support agriculture, urban agriculture. Um, you know they just had a volunteer group down here just like last week. I can't remember what company it was, but there's been a lot of exposure, a lot of publicity given to the movement." Others discussed how some restaurants are purchasing from urban growers and in

some cases using that as a marketing tool by listing the names of the growers they purchase from on their menus. Others described hospitals and other companies that have their own gardens or that support farmers' markets or CSAs on-site. A school grower, a white female in her 40s, explained how she thinks the businesses around the garden support it:

> . . . because of the land use issues and the fact that it generally tends to improve the property in an area, and-, and they support it in terms of the food network. I mean Kansas City's huge, you know, huge in terms of, you know, restaurants and local businesses supporting the use, the distribution and use of locally grown produce.

Some governmental departments, governmental employees, and elected officials on both sides of the state line were named as being active supporters of urban agriculture. Also, there is some support at the county level in the case of Wyandotte County within the Unified Government of Wyandotte County. On the Missouri side, there is support at the state level, particularly by State Representative Jason Holsman who represents the 7th State Senate district which is in Jackson County. As mentioned, some members of the city council in Kansas City, Missouri were active supporters, and still are, of revising city ordinances in favor of urban agriculture. A community member, a white female in her 30s, mentioned that if they "started to really push chickens or bees or, um, milk goats, um, I think that would probably stir up quite a bit of resistance among elected officials, um, and- and others within the community." Some areas of Kansas City already have chickens, bees, and goats whether or not they are legal in that area.

Most interviewees said urban agriculture impacts their communities and the city in beneficial ways. A white female grower explained how access to healthy food is increasing, community is being built, and other associations are being formed that are providing employment during the duration of the programs and as long as the programs continue to be

supported with funding. The grower explained how urban agriculture is having an impact on the community and on the city:

> So providing food and building a web of community, but also raising awareness of healthy food and actually bringing healthy food into neighborhoods and to people who haven't typically known or been able to get it. So the second layer, . . . other groups have been formed . . . the idea behind urban agriculture grew into the Beans and Greens program and grew into the Get Growing team and its growing into other ones, even to do with doctors writing prescriptions for healthy food.

A community member, a white male in his 50s, described how he sees the impacts of urban agriculture in Kansas City,

> I think we're starting to see some of the impacts, uh, it pulls people together, um, they, uh, have, uh, kind of united in working on these projects, and, uh, have a sense of pride . . . about what they're doing. Uh, a number of people that, uh, didn't have jobs and, uh, were pretty much in the house and not getting out had been pulled out to takeover certain aspects of the garden . . . and, uh, seemed to take pride in what they do. And, uh, earn a little bit of income. . . .

Another community member, a white female in her 20s, explained how their community gardening program is reaching more people in the community and more people are getting involved:

> . . . our goal is to make [the] neighborhood where, um, anyone can-, can access healthy produce and while we still have a ways to go with that it definitely has brought in the, um, awareness and the scope. . . . we've always had like the more of the hipster, young folk, young people wanting to come in and urban garden, but this year we've had a lot more low-income families wanting to garden as well. And it definitely has made an impact in terms of savings for them on food costs. And just getting outside and meeting your neighbors that's a huge part of the community gardens here.

Many interviewees believe jobs are being created or could be created in the future related to urban agriculture. A community gardener, a white female in her 30s, explained how she sees the potential for future job creation in urban agriculture:

> I think definitely there's some need for like that upper level farmer, um, but then even down to the gardening aspect I mean as gardener-, gardening continues to grow we need more and more people to kind of be out in the community helping with education and resources, and so I think as the movement takes off and as there's more funding available and more interest there could definitely be more jobs surrounding it.

A number of people said that part-time jobs may be the most available and that there is not a lot of money to be made by urban farmers. Therefore, they do not usually have the means to hire additional help. However, as it has been discussed, there are apprenticeships and volunteer opportunities that allow people to learn and to often receive free produce.

Consistent with Lyson's (2004) argument that civic agriculture can increase the local economic multiplier effects, a market grower, a white female, explained how purchasing food grown in the city is beneficial because it keeps money circulating in the local economy and it does so to a much greater extent than purchasing things from Wal-Mart. She said, "80 percent of a dollar that's spent at Wal-Mart immediately leaves the community." She went on to explain that she thinks "that there's also an impact on people's health and on the health of the environment, on all of these things as we get more green spaces and as we get more people involved in urban agriculture. . . . I think it's just going to keep growing."

However, not all of the interviewees think urban agriculture is being supported. For example, initially there was pushback from some community residents in affluent neighborhoods and some realtors in Kansas City, Missouri when revisions to the codes governing urban agriculture were under discussion, but the changes were passed. Now in Kansas City, Kansas (in Wyandotte County) with more people becoming interested in increasing food production those who do not approve are voicing their concerns. A community member in her 20s explained that

although there are some gardens and even the large Juniper Gardens Training Farm in the area, not everyone is supportive. She said the following:

> For the most part though, we-, we don't see a large proliferation of, um, of gardens or sort of personal growing practices, um, is my impression and we continue to experience, um, a disproportionate amount of political pushback in my opinion. . . . I think, uh, there's a combination of some community members and then also commissioners who don't necessarily see, um, urban agriculture as an amenity, uh, but rather as a, uh, different form of blight or a reversion back to a state of the community that they don't see as desirable.

She did go on to say that urban agriculture has been positively impacting the area. She said it has been decreasing food insecurity, and that more food is being grown at some of the schools, and local food, but not urban grown food, is also being brought in and provided to area students.

Revealing some of the other challenges with urban agriculture a few examples were shared about how some African Americans, depending on the context, feel uncomfortable engaging in food production. An educational grower, who is white, explained that some of the African American staff members and children at the educational center where he gardens expressed their uneasiness in garden work. He explained:

> . . . sometimes I think that the . . . African Americans, uh, are, uh, have some, uh, cultural memories of slavery. . . . They're not their own memories . . . but I think they-, I've actually heard it from a couple of kids. Uh, but maybe even just one. . . . But there have been staff members who went out here just to kind of help out [and] got into the-, those feelings. . . . And they felt that kind of thing. They had to [say] 'oh, look at that. Isn't that interesting.' I mean, you know, it wasn't that they didn't want to work or anything, it-, it was just that it came up as uh, 'oh, this is what the field hands did isn't it?' . . . And then [think], 'do I want to do that?'

A community member, an African American male in his 60s, shared a similar sentiment when I asked if urban agriculture was having an impact on his community:

> . . . I mean as far as the everyday person, no. They-, they're saying comments like, 'I'm not growing no food man, I go out there and start growing and picking food I feel like I'm in slavery'. . . You know that kind of mentality is floating around out there because most of the people who are providing the programs are

> white. . . . And when you have that person that is in the middle of the black community trying to create that kind of a program that is an excuse to people to use. Now, I have black folks just out there doing it too and they don't have anything to do with them either because that's-, I'm not going to help them get ahead so to speak. So that's-, so no, it's not having the impact that it should. . . . Now is that recognized? No, I don't know, I mean there's still money being funded, there's still programs being created, you know there's still a tremendous amount of interest in what's going on up in a Milwaukee with my guy [Will Allen of Growing Power], uh, but so what. . . . You know, when we go around the neighborhoods today, I see more gardens now than I did before and that's great. I think that's great, okay, but there's no connection. I mean there's no connection. I mean there's more of an egotistical reason of having a beautiful garden than survival reason. And at this juncture we should be teaching people to do this to survive. Okay.

While we were discussing if urban agriculture is providing benefits, such as jobs this community member explained:

> No. I do see one particular one that we have. One of the greatest ones I know of is Cultivate KC. . . . And it's-, that's it in its entirety of anything else in this city you may have one or two people working in other places, but as far as any serious, uh, employment type possibilities Cultivate Kansas City is the one that has done it. Uh, I think Katherine Kelly is a genius. And-, but she needs more of what I'm doing to-, to create her a population that reaches out to what she's creating. She's a-, she's a prime example of a type of place that has created some magnificent programs and activities . . . but has no-, when she does her thing she's preaching to the choir. . . . Everybody there already is doing-, is trying to do what she does. They're trying to have a megabuck food production system. . . . And the public is totally left out of the equation.

Similarly, when asked if she has seen jobs being created in urban agriculture a community member, an African American in her 40s, said:

> I see a lot of jobs being creat[ed] in regards to analyzing it, jobs being created to go and discuss it on panels and things of that nature. Money is being spent in many ways other than actually doing it. Uh, I think the money could be better served with us actually putting those dollars to work to actually create more gardens, create more, uh, opportunities for agriculture to be readily available in the inner city as opposed to paying people salaries to talk about it.

As one who works in a food desert in Jackson County, Missouri with, primarily, African Americans in poverty, the amount of time she sees spent with people discussing urban agriculture could be better utilized by creating and maintaining more gardens that people can participate in and benefit from. Additionally, another African American interviewee expressed the resentment that some African Americans feel toward some of the specific urban agriculture projects that are happening in their areas in Kansas City:

> I see jobs coming in [ ] associated with agriculture, but they're not focused on Wyandotte County. I-, uh, I mean that-, that comes up at the table as well, is that, uh, it's, uh, becoming a little bit, uh, plantational I believe. . . . the overseers don't look like the people who are doing the picking. . . . And I think that turns some folks off . . . from farming, from community gardens. I think that's one of the reasons that people decide to do one on their own or in smaller groups or that type of thing. . . . It's that old-fashioned mentality, way before both of us were born, but it's still there.

I let this person know that generally with urban agriculture I have heard others share experiences about how, in some cases, white people go into an area and expect the people of color there to get involved. The interviewee replied:

> Not only that, you come in and this is-, I mean it's not much of a legacy that black people have in this country, but slavery is a legacy and farming is attached to slavery and cooking is attached to slavery and then you have people coming in to tell you how to farm, to tell you how to cook, and that's what brought you here in the first place. I think that is, uh, condescending and offends some people.

I asked how this could be avoided, and the following was said:

> Well, it can only be-, it can be avoided by, uh, making sure, uh, not necessarily people like me, making sure that those people are at the table. Uh, making sure that if I am at that table that I make sure-, that I find a way to bring them to the table as well. Uh, for instance, uh, I had a conversation with someone talking about canning and what have you and she, uh, wanted to involve everybody in it except the seniors and the old people who have been doing it all their lives. Even though there may be some new technology to canning, the ancient or older techniques, some of them are still being used and some of them have a great deal of value. . . . [even] if you don't use a single tip that they give you, bringing them

> to the table shows that you at least respect the, uh, knowledge or experience that they do have in something that seems just so simple, matter of fact for them. . . . it would also be a good way to incorporate some of the changes, uh, with older people, uh, help to change their mindset a little bit. . . . nurture the whole building of, uh, this new whatever, it's not new, but this re-visiting of, uh, agriculture.

In general this person thinks community residents support urban agriculture and that it is likely they would "support it more if they knew where they [the gardens] all were." From this point of view, you can increase residents' agricultural literacy (Lyson 2004) (i.e., their knowledge of agriculture) by first respecting their knowledge and then sharing new things with them.

People and neighborhoods have differing ideas on the types of food production they support or that they are willing to tolerate in their areas. A few interviewees told me the story about the farmers of BADSEED who had to leave their farm in a middle class area because the community was not supportive, and that the location of their new farm, URBAVORE, on the eastside of Kansas City, Missouri in a "working class, somewhat blighted neighborhood" is more accepting. A market grower explained that whether there is support for urban agriculture

> really depends where you are. Um, which is so sad, and I wish that would change, but frankly, I mean, it's not going to change because it's a product of-, of racism and classism, you know, discriminating sorts of ideas and values that have been a part of our society and our culture for centuries. . . . So, like, that's not just going to up and go away, you know.

These comments really get to some of the deep seated challenges for urban agriculture and society in general. Some interviewees mentioned similar statements to the idea that overall people like urban agriculture in theory, but for some they do not like it as much when it gets closer to their own areas. Also as discussed, urban agriculture alone cannot solve all of the problems as to why many believe the agrifood system is not fair. It can help to allow space for people to come together and potentially work on deeper issues, such as class and race relations, but, for example, community gardens by themselves cannot remedy structural inequalities.

Whether the agrifood system is dominated by corporate agriculture or other types of agricultures, including midsize and smaller-scale family farms and alternatives agricultures--which promote increasing fairness in the system, including urban agriculture--broader societal relations of classism and racism may still exist. This will be returned to in chapter seven, "Conclusion."

Summary

My results are aligned with the civil society, civic communities, and civic agriculture perspectives. Overall, urban agricultural participants' experiences in Kansas City show that participating in the agrifood activities in one's locale is a beneficial way to build connections and strengthen civil society all while increasing the fairness in the agrifood system by increasing access to food, providing civic engagement opportunities, creating jobs, and benefiting the environmental health of the city. Urban agricultural participants' causes in Kansas City are not coordinated into one unified voice. The levels of success of urban agriculture differ in neighborhoods, communities, and in parts of the city as is shown through the experiences mentioned by a number of interviewees, including a few African Americans, an Asian-American, and a few Caucasians. Some of these interviewees were specifically referrring to urban agriculture in Wyandotte County, Kansas as not being as supported by individuals, linked by organizations, or as institutionally supported compared to many of the efforts occurring in Jackson County, Missouri. However, overall the urban agricultural and broader agrifood system activities that people and groups are engaged in are pushing for people's rights, social programs, and laws that benefit the residents. Although it may be the case for some in areas deemed food deserts to focus on their neighborhoods and building social capital within them, in general participants are not simply building social capital, but they are actively working with governments and businesses in their aims to get fresh, healthy, affordable food to people of all

socio-economic levels. In addition, a larger aim is to socially and economically strengthen communities. Just as Lyson (2004) spoke of civic agriculture as increasing a community's problem-solving capacity, urban agriculture as civic agriculture provides social spaces where people can come together to discuss and to work on other issues they face in their areas, their communities, and at broader social levels. These activities promote increased fairness in the agrifood system.

Next, chapter six, "Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System," is a look to the future. I return to discussing the Kansas commodity farmer interviewees to share some of the concerns they have about the future of their farms. Then, I focus on what the Kansas City interviewees envision for the future of agriculture in Kansas City and the United States in general. This includes a discussion of their views on the future of agrifood activities and food movement(s).

Chapter 6 - Visions for the U.S. Agrifood System

The BACC: FLUD project team's interviews with Kansas commodity farmers reveals the concerns many of them have about the future of their farms. By looking at these concerns and then discussing the Kansas City interviewees' views on the future of agriculture it is shown that many in Kansas City recognize these same issues with U.S. agriculture. In addition, they have ideas on how agriculture could be different, and this is discussed. Kansas City interviewees explained what they see for the future of agriculture in Kansas City and the United States in general. In addition, after discussing weather and issues of climate change with the Kansas commodity farmers I decided to have a more in-depth discussion on climate change with interviewees in Kansas City. Overall, KC interviewees would prefer that U.S. agriculture and food practices and processes were more sustainable. This includes taking into consideration how to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate. Most of the KC interviewees are also hopeful that agriculture and food activities and movements will continue to gain support and will positively impact more people.

Kansas Farmers' Views on the Future of their Farms

In the BACC: FLUD study we did not specifically ask the farmers about their visions for the future of agriculture. However, we did ask them about their farms and discussions regarding the future of agriculture occurred at different times, such as when discussing farm economics. To give a sense of these discussions, the focus here is on their responses regarding whether or not they have concerns about the future of their farms. Some said they did not have concerns, but the main themes from those who do have concerns involved succession (i.e., who would take over

the farm when they could no longer oversee it); financial concerns, such as the rising cost of inputs, machinery, the unpredictability of markets; and that bigger farms are growing in size and number and it is hard to compete, particularly if you are a beginning farmer. Concerns with the weather were also mentioned. For example, when asked if he had concerns about the future of his farm, a farmer's response was focused on succession:

> Yeah, I really do. I'd like to keep it in the family. And my son said, you know, you built this thing up . . . it's hard to let it go and I agree 100 percent . . . it'd be a sad day when we retire. I don't know what I'll do but . . . I'd like to keep it in the family, but . . . my one son is . . . 50 . . .

In response to the same question another farmer expressed economic concerns when he stated, "Yeah, I worry about the availability of land, I worry about interest rates, fuel prices, you know . . . there are a lot of things squeezing on all sides." Another farmer mentioned the weather, markets, and competition as being his concerns for the future of his farm. He said, "Yeah, you know the weather and the markets can change . . . your outlook drastically . . . and another problem is . . . just how competitive it is here. Our big farmers you know they keep-, they keep, getting a lot bigger. It's kind of hard to compete with 'em . . ." Lastly, another farmer discussed his concerns about how it is getting harder for beginning farmers to get into and be successful at farming:

> . . . I just see bigger farmers getting bigger . . . and I don't mind that . . . I'm a little bit concerned about that, I guess to a certain extent because I don't, it just seem[s] like some young farmers, it just costs so much to get in-, involved in farming anymore and . . . unless you-, you know start with your dad or somebody that's got some help for you it's a-, it's a challenge.

The voices of these farmers are examples of the experiences of larger-scale farmers, but overall farmers who expressed concerns are not the mega-farms owned by corporate conglomerates. Most of the farmers we interviewed have family owned farms. The average sales

were in the range of $250,000 to $299,999 and the median was $150,000 to $199,999. The average total acres in a farm operation was 1,285 acres and the median was 645 acres. We did speak with farmers that have million dollar farms, and they were about eight percent of the interviewee sample. The largest farm operation was 13,237 acres, and the largest reported sales for an operation was $2 million or more which was reported by a handful of farmers.

While some of the Kansas City growers and community members I spoke with do have family members who are engaged in or were engaged in large-scale farming, for the most part their daily lives are not as directly connected with the issues brought up by the Kansas farmers concerning the future of their farms. As discussed, other than the market growers and some of the others, many of the urban growers do not sell produce for their livelihoods. While many may be growing food out of a feeling of necessity, they will not likely lose their home if they do not produce enough food like a farmer could if they did not sell a large enough amount of product. However, overall, the concerns they expressed for the future of their gardens revolved around similar issues, and growers in general can relate to issues of succession, financial concerns, and competition at some level. What is different and what I have already extensively discussed is that, other than the market growers who work mainly with their families, these charity, community, educational, and school growers are all working closely with others who share their burdens and who also share their skills and ideas in addressing issues the growers and the organizations face. They are not alone trying to make their garden/farm successful. I return to this in the conclusion which is chapter seven. For now the focus is on their visions for the future of agriculture and the future of food movement(s).

Kansas City Interviewees' Visions for Agriculture

The growers and community members explained what they envision for the future of agriculture in Kansas City and in the United States more broadly. Even though some of the interviewees discussed climate change at different points in the interviews, we purposely talked about it within the context of agriculture. Wrapping up the interviews, we talked about whether there is a food movement or some sort of movements around food and what the future holds for activities and movements involving food.

Most of the interviewees believe urban agriculture in Kansas City will continue to thrive. However, while it may lose some growers and gardens along the way, overall, it will become more productive and increasingly supported. A market grower, a white female, explained how people are really enjoying being a part of urban agriculture, and consistent with Putnam (1993) and Granovetter (1973), she said this participation allows diverse people to come together:

> I think people are hooked on it [urban agriculture], so there will be a need for it. As time goes [on] more people will need to grow food, but right now folks are still getting into it because it's fun. So some of the farmers are hot shot, almost rock stars, so that's fun [laughter]. Some farmers are just, you know, really trying to perfect their skills so that's awesome. It's a way for an individual, someone who is like a non-conformist . . . it's a way for a person to express themselves in a non-traditional way. And it's a way for many different kinds of people to express themselves and to have common ground with which to have discussion.

While harvesting squash another market grower, also a white female, discussed what she sees for the future of agriculture in Kansas City:

> I definitely see that there's, um, more opportunities and there's interest. More people will-, I mean there will be more local farms coming online. There's more families that are wanting to go back to their roots of farming and-, uh, (did I miss any squash on that side?) . . . there's more consumer demand than there is product.

Resembling Tocqueville's (1935) argument that associations are necessary to promote the interests of civil society, a grower mentioned the importance of organizations continuing their work advancing urban agriculture. While discussing what she sees for the future of agriculture in Kansas City she explained:

> Well again, it's going to take place. On what scale, I don't know. Um, right now we're in a pretty good place in terms of local and state laws that allows people to grow and to do things, and hopefully those expand and become even better. But, um, it's going to continue to take place, which direction it goes in, I don't know, but groups like Cultivate [Kansas City] are working hard to keep it on the forefront and what not. As long as they stay in existence, it will continue to grow.

A community member, who was involved in helping to revise the urban agriculture ordinances, explained how he sees more people will be involved and more types of food production will occur in the future:

> Well, . . . I think, uh, urban agriculture will continue to grow in Kansas City. I think you'll see more and more vacant lots turned into community gardens, I think you'll see more people, uh, gardening, uh, at their residences for-, for their own consumption and-, and, uh, for possible sale or donation of the produce. I think you'll see more community supported agriculture, I think you'll see, uh, more varied types of agriculture, including animal husbandry, like raising goats for milk and cheese production, raising chickens for both meat and eggs. Uh, I think you'll see hydroponics develop here, uh, in a larger scale where, uh, you have more fish farms. Um, so I think you'll, uh, see it continue to expand.

A few participants did mention they hope it is not just a fad that people will lose interest in. For example, a community member, a white female in her 20s, expressed her hopes for the future of urban agriculture in Kansas City:

> I think it's going to grow. Um, I think one real challenge is keeping people involved. I don't want to see it be a fad. Um, I was talking with some people from American Community Gardening Association about that and they, you know, the folks that are older and have been through this for the past 35 years since it started said that it looks like it did in the 70s, like there's this wave of people getting interested and then they're going to drop off. But I'm really hoping that it can

> become more than a wave of people and become more of a[n] actual shift in the way that we look at food production.

A school gardener, an African American in her 40s, who is also concerned that growing food may just be a fad for some people explained how she thinks it may be possible to keep the interest up:

> Now I think we're going through a foodie trend. You know, where there's so many chef shows and chef competitions and all of that. So I think as long as we are in this trend, if we can get some folks hooked on the trend that are willing to carry it out when it doesn't seem so popular. You know, I think it will go far. And I think that means that we're going to have to make sure that people know that it's accessible and that it's easy and that it's, um, um, something that can be sustained. . . . I think the neat thing that has happened to-, especially the class that started the garden, is that they started here and then when they left there were actually other opportunities [to be involved with gardens] waiting on them.

Similar to Allen's (2004) and Bell's (2004) discussion on knowledge and power, the knowledge and experiences the students have acquired has opened up doors that previously did not exist. The school gardener is saying that if people involved in urban agriculture can show others how to sustain a project, such as a garden, that the movement will be more successful. Following Bell, people involved who are acquiring knowledge and developing power would be better able to develop an identity around their food growing activities. As Eliasoph (1998) recommends, through these experiences they could feel more empowered in voicing their thoughts and concerns that link their gardening experiences with broader issues.

A few people talked about local growers around Kansas City in addition to urban production. A community member, a white female in her 30s, explained that she would like to see more "actual food production" in the region. She explained, "this region 100 years ago, um, was largely self-reliant for the-, for the staples in our diet," but we would not be able to rely on

what is currently being produced in the region, because it is largely corn and soybeans. She explained:

> . . . so much of what we grow in this region now is soybeans and corn, not-, most of which are not actually, um, immediately edible. . . . they need to be heavily processed in order to be edible or, uh, because they . . . are not being produced in, uh, varieties that are intended for immediate human consumption. It's not sweet corn that's being produced. It's corn for high fructose corn syrup or-, or for ethanol production. And, um, soybeans, it's often soybeans that are, um, a variety that are intended to be, um, processed and used for animal feed.

A few interviewees expressed their interest in having more organized food activities, including a food hub and community food processing plants, where growers could use the same facility to create value-added products, such as salsa. A community member, an African American, provided support for a food hub that would include growers from the region:

> . . . I think we're on the brink of either going one direction or another. I think, um, if we can introduce some local policies that allow, um, the small growers in the urban core to be a part of the, uh, larger distribution channels, locally I think we'll do phenomenal. And if the right people get in the same room about the food hub discussion I think it will revolutionize for some of the local growers, uh, a distribution system that will allow them to touch more customers whether it's more restaurants, whether it's more institutions, whether it be schools or hospitals, um, I think that, um, is right there. Uh, and if we can make the right choices then that will come to fruition, but if we don't then I think what we're going to start to see is that some of the local growers that have been in it for a number of years and struggled, they might scale back. . . .

Thinking of Tocqueville, Bellah et al., Putnam, Eliasoph, Somers, and Lyson's arguments, people can join together in a formal way in these community activities, particularly as it was mentioned here with food hubs. They can potentially share in the costs of the facilities or share in the work to get the facilities started. They could also maintain their participation in them to help keep them going.

Overall, concerning agriculture at the national level, interviewees believe large-scale and small-scale production will continue. Many interviewees particularly said large-scale producers

and those with a lot of money will continue to do well and will likely grow in scale. For example, a school gardener, a white female in her 40s, reacted to the question of what does she see for the future of agriculture in the U.S. in general:

> Oh, man! [Laughter]. You know, I don't know, I actually see a bigger divide, you know, it's sort of the divide of the classes I think. We're going the same way in terms of looking at a whole lot of different systems in the United States where we're going to see agribusiness get bigger and we're going to see, uh, urban farming get bigger. Um, you know it's going to be the small guys and then the big guys, and then everybody that was sort of in the middle is, you know, that's where the fallout's happening. You know we see it everywhere. I mean over the last 20 years how many times have you driven back and forth across the country and see[n] abandoned, dilapidated farms and land for sale and fallow and, you know, what have you. . . . you're sort of seeing the division getting larger.

Along those same lines, I had the following exchange with an educational grower, an African American in her 40s, who works in a food desert:

> Me: What do you see for the future of agriculture in the U.S. in general?
> Educational Grower: I think it depends where you live.
> Me: Okay, like, what do you mean, for example?
> Educational Grower: I think if you have a higher income and a certain zip code you'll see it continue. Lower income, lower zip codes it may not make it.
> Me: Urban and rural agriculture?
> Educational Grower: Mm-hmm.

A number of growers said there will need to be more people growing food in the future. For example, while discussing the future of his garden, a grower, a white male, explained what he sees for the future of vegetable production in the U.S. He said while there needs to be more growers, the interest in and the knowledge of food production is not very widespread in the younger generations today:

> Uh, that's something I have some control over which is why I try to do an apprentice program as much as I do. I want to teach younger people how to be able to do what I do. To take a very small piece of ground and either be able to feed yourself, feed your family, feed your friends, or feed a small portion of a market from a small amount of ground. . . . Yeah, so I have to figure out how to

> do it the right way, make my ground right, and I want to be able to teach other people to do that. . . . Now that's the secret to what the future of urban farming or-, or vegetable farming is in the entire god-damn country is teaching another generation of people. And it's primarily a TV and gadget, uh, generation that doesn't have a great deal of desire to learn that. But they do from an idealistic point of view . . . but not from a realistic point of view.

A grower, a white female in her 40s, explained why she thinks more people will need to grow in the future:

> Oh, because food will not be available. Food will not be as easily available in grocery stores or coming from outside, because of all the things, because of the climate change, because of the cost of fossil fuels, because of well . . . just the rising prices and people will have to grow more of their own.

She continued to explain what she sees for the future of U.S. agriculture:

> I think it's going to be scaled down, but more of it will be happening. So there will be a big growth in the number of people growing and the acceptability of it, hopefully, the sustainability of it. And so that's one of the things that we hope to do here is to try to look into the future and see what's going to be needed in ten years and how to start providing that. So start providing the healing to the soil that is gonna [be needed]. Because there's a lot of hungry people. There's going to be a lot of growing food, and how can we take care of the soil to continue to let that happen.

She is expressing concern for others, and they are working on ways to adapt to changing societal and growing conditions so that they can continue to offer fresh foods. They have a community mentality, or following Putnam (1993), Tolbert et al. (2002), and Lyson (2004) they have a civic community mentality. They are not just thinking about themselves and how they can keep producing food, but they are thinking about how they can help develop the knowledge needed to keep producing food for others.

A community member, an Asian American in her 20s, explained what she would like to see for the future of urban agriculture and U.S. agriculture more broadly. She said it is important to aim to reach a broad audience and to educate them on food production and consumption:

> Um, okay, so I think education and outreach is the first step for the future of urban agriculture. I would like to see, again, more family owned farms in the future, so less dependence on huge agribusiness. Um, I'd like to see, um, Monsanto and Cargill and, you know, a lot of those large companies, um, I'd like to see [laughs] fewer federal policies that, um, benefit them. I'd like to see their . . . ability to lobby on the hill, um, prevented. Um, their ability to influence, uh, the Supreme Court [laughs], um, decrease. . . . I think it-, that comes with a shift in thinking across the nation about what our priorities are, how we employ people, how we interact with our food system.

I asked her if she thought these things would occur and if this is the future of agriculture in the United States. She responded:

> One can only hope, [both laugh], one can only hope. It helps that, you know, um, like the *Omnivore's Dilemma* was the best seller on the New York Times [best sellers list], right. Like I think that it helps that these messages are getting out there. I think that the message tends to get out there to people who have college educations, um, who earn more than $60,000 a year, um, you know, the message gets out to a very small portion of the population. Um, but we-, we aren't reaching a lot of people that we need to. I think part of that starts in the classroom, um, I would like to see food and nutrition and things-, subjects around growing better integrated with educational curriculums starting in grade school. Um, so that kids are used to-, [laughs] kids know how things grow and are used to the concepts of different fruits and vegetables outside of apples, bananas, and oranges, um, in the classroom.

As it has been discussed in earlier chapters, there has been an increase in farm-to-school programs and the numbers of school gardens. Many schools also have educational components along with these programs, including nutrition and/or gardening education. All of the interviewees I spoke with who work with children or teenagers and who have a garden also have nutrition education for the student body.

An educational grower, a white male in his 20s, explained that he believes big changes will need to happen in the future for U.S. agriculture:

> Well, I think whether we like it or not, we're going to have to shift more toward solar and wind power. There's going to have to be a definite back-to-the-land movement. There's going to have to be way more farmers as we move away from fossil fuels. Um, so I think just as there [was] this grand exodus from the country to the city . . . we're about to see that more in the cities. I think there's going to be a lot of people that are going out to the countr[y]. I think, um, our farming class is going to grow hugely and it already has. I mean, it's become nothing and now it's building itself back up again. I mean all of these urban farmers are farmers. Um, I know tons of people making their living doing this. And yeah, they might work a part-time job, but there's a lot of farmers out there that are working part-time jobs too . . . Um, so I think that's going to be a big shift. Then, uh, I don't know if it will become more profitable to become a farmer. That's a hard one. But, uh, people are making a living so.

A community member, a white male in his 50s, was discussing what urban agriculture is aiming to accomplish and he contextualized it in terms of how much it, along with local agriculture in general, will be needed in the future:

> . . . my involvement with local food . . . is, um, one, to keep the money and the assets local, okay, without investing in interstate or intrastate or global transportation systems to provide food to people. Um, basic foodstuffs can be provided locally with a minimum of, uh, transportation expense, with a minimum of dependence on Big Oil and Big Chemical, you know, industrialized chemical agriculture. Um, there are other good reasons for eating organically, but in terms of making our urban communities and suburban communities . . . as a whole as cities . . . I mean that's what city-states were first invented [for] and based on was the fact that we could do agriculture in one place and stay there and do it. Um, the resilience of these cities is going to depend on-, in-, in the future as Big Oil-, the Big Oil bubble just completely deflates, well it's going to depend on being able to produce food closer to home, if not in your own home.

Consistent with Lyson's argument of the local economic multiplier effect, this community member strives to support local activities for that reason. Additionally he supports it because he believes there is a need and there will increasingly be a need for more localized production and consumption because our current agrifood system--that is dependent on large-scale agriculture

and widespread distribution that is dependent on cheap oil--will face extreme difficulties maintaining its processes. Similarly, but not discussed in terms that drastic changes need to happen, a community member who is also a community gardener, a white female in her 50s, explained, ". . . I mean Big Agriculture's not going away . . . but it would be certainly nice to see more and more cities coming up with local-, if not a community garden then, uh, even a city sponsored garden . . ."

Most of the interviewees believe in climate change and think human activities are a contributing factor in causing it. They gave examples of some of the actions that they believe are contributing to climate change. Many of them have ideas on how we could lessen the human impacts that are adding to climate change. Some felt we need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel energy and that we need to drive vehicles less.

When asked if they thought climate change was occurring a number of interviewees replied briefly. An educational grower, an African American in her 40s, stated: "Something's occurring, because we've had some craziness going on in the last few years. You know between not having a winter this year . . . to this hot, dry summer to just everything. Look for me God's always in control of it, so I listen to the science of it, and I think there's been a case made for climate change." Another educational grower, an African American in her 40s, said: "It sure seems like it to me. Um, last year [it was] so-, so mild I had a gardener harvesting carrots in December." A community gardener, a Mexican American in her 50s, responded: "Oh my, goodness yes."

An educational grower, a white male in his 20s, was explaining to me that he believes climate change is occurring, that it will "hugely" impact agriculture and food, that "we're already feeling them [the impacts]," and that "I mean, yes, things do fluctuate, and yes you have always

had climate change-, [climate] changing, but all of the scientific evidence points to that we're having a direct effect and that it will lead to things that aren't so fun." I asked him what it is that humans are doing that is contributing to climate change, and he replied:

> Well, um, agriculture is a huge one. I mean, you look at the numbers, how they crunch. A huge amount of fossil fuels go into food production, and the shipping of food, and that, um, through those exhaust pipes and through the creating of, uh, artificial fertilizers, um, and uh processing. All of it, uh, it adds up hugely.

In response to me asking him what can be done about climate change he explained, "[w]ell, shifting to systems like this, is one example . . ." I replied, "[do] [y]ou mean shifting to local foods?" He explained:

> Shifting to, yeah, if you're growing it where you are and you're doing it yourself then you're really breaking away from all those very fossil fuel dependent ways of growing that cause climate change. Um, and then also, yeah, stopping dependence on driving, a part of that is also moving . . . to more local systems. Um, you know, you can still have your farms, but the farms should be close to the cities where the people are.

In talking with a school grower, a white male in his 20s, about climate change and agriculture, he told me, "[y]eah, it's absolutely true that humans are causing, at least in part, climate change." He went on to discuss the need for mitigation and adaptation. He explained, "[a]nd then adaptation, I think adaptation is-, [it] really needs to be our next goal. And so realizing how it's [climate change] going to affect agriculture and how it's going to affect business, how it's going to affect societies, communities, and prepare for that." I asked him if he thought that would happen. He replied:

> Yeah, I think actually it will because money is more directly involved. Um, so with agriculture for instance, I was just at a conference at [a university] on adapting to climate change. And agriculture is very concerned, because it can potentially be very costly for them if they don't prepare for it. Also, if we can predict climate change more accurately, we have a vague idea of what will happen regionally, there could be a lot of money to be made in preparing for it. Um, and I

> know it's kind of a sensitive topic, but yeah, I think there are corp-, there are entities right now that are preparing to try to make money for, on climate change.

I asked if he had a general example or if he could explain a little more about what he means. He replied:

> Yeah, so for instance if we do get rain in just a few large events, then if you can produce a seed that only needs water in that respect then you [will] profit very much. Or if you know that the climate will shift 200 hundred miles south of where it used to be or something. Um, if you can go ahead, if you have the money you can buy a plant and you can prepare to produce said crops and on that land. And those are just examples coming kind of off the top of my head, but I think there, there certainly was a lot of talk of money to be made with adapting to how climate will change.

In response to the question regarding what do they think of the idea that humans are causing climate change a few interviewees remarked briefly in agreement. For example, a grower, an African American in her 60s, responded: "Probably that, we have a lot to do with climate change." A community gardener, an African American in her 30s, said: "I agree. I believe that we are a major factor in climate change. The whole global warming thing. Not being as green and as mindful as we could." A community member, an African American in his 30s, remarked:

> "Absolutely, I agree . . . with that whole heartedly [laughs]. Whether it's all the diesel rigs at the gas stations that leave their cars running or leave their trucks running for thirty minutes while they fill up and everything else. I think a lot of what we do from an energy perspective, vehicles, even how we use energy from an electricity standpoint obviously has an impact on it.

For some, they did not think enough action would be taken to mitigate or adapt to climate change until there was a catastrophe that forces changes to be made or a great shift in people's thinking and then in their actions that leads to changes. A grower, a white male, explained his view of the future of U.S. agriculture: "[He starts with a big sigh.] Well, it depends on who wins

the [2012 presidential] election. . . . I think that the whole place is going to come to a standstill, and whoever's left is going to be doing it. If there is anybody left [laughs.]" I asked if he thinks something catastrophic has to happen before change will happen, and he replied:

> Well it-, it's-, isn't that the way people work? I mean you don't change unless you get hit in the head with a 2 by 4 like . . . or you're an alcoholic and one of these days you actually hit bottom and you realize you're going to die and-, and then you realize also that you don't want to die. I mean there's a lot of factors there. . . . Now, what-, what's going to happen? How's-, you know, [it going to happen?]. It can happen through the arts. It can happen by an opening of people and, uh, so-, so damned if I know [laughter]. I mean, if I can make this garden so beautiful [grower gestures wide with arms and I laugh] and people walk in here and they go, 'what did you do' . . . then you can look off into the stuff that's growing out there and you see, 'oh, wow look at all the life energy in it'. And-, and you become high on it, then you could transcend your crap, your stuff. That's what nature does, that's why people go to national-, national parks because they feel-, they come back renewed. You know, that's why they go fishing. . . hunting. That's why they put themselves in those places, because those are sumps for spiritual uplifting things that happen. . . .

As the above discussion shows, many of the urban growers and other participants in alternative agrifood activities take the issue of climate change very seriously. Some of them think the skills being developed with learning how to grow food, sharing such knowledge within communities, and relying less on fossil fuel energy as a way of life is going to be far more important in the future as the impacts of climate change--with the possibilities of more unpredictable and extreme weather events--are being felt. Large-scale agriculture may not be able to adapt as quickly to the changing climate as the smaller growers, including many of the urban growers. While only a couple of interviewees specifically spoke of urban agriculture or their communities in terms of resiliency, the continual discussions by interviewees about the importance of community, working together, and working on behalf of each other reveals they believe there is strength in community. For them, all of these connections and the knowledge that is being shared assists those involved in becoming more resilient to the challenges with weather,

economics, and policies they face and that they anticipate for the future. Consistent with a number of interviewees' concerns about the future, a community member, a white male in his 50s, explained what he sees for the future of U.S. agriculture:

> The economics of scale are going to fail, because our energy systems are so out of whack, dependent on Big Oil. So, there's . . . going to be a natural shift. . . . These initiatives [. . . Cultivate Kansas City] are taking off, but it's gonna-, the sea change is going to happen when the energy inputs-, the cheap energy inputs disappear or price themselves out of-, out of, you know, contention-, out of the competition. And yet then we'll have all these people with all this expertise ready to just kick in and go. They'll . . . become teachers and, you know, growers will be able to retire and teach in turns as they retire and it will be fine. You know, we need to keep . . . land trusts, land usage available to-, to urban ag[riculture] and not allow, um, um, residential development to color everything. Um, I think a good mix is a good thing, some diversity. An awesome-, an awesome word diversity. Nature thrives on diversity rather than monoculture. We'll find that in our land use too.

Food Movement(s)

Many of the interviewees believe there is an overarching food movement or there are numerous food movements, and some of them definitely feel a part of a food or agricultural movement. Others say they hear some people talk about food activities as movements, but they do not necessarily know much about it. They do know people are working on food issues from a variety of angles, and they hope it will continue into the future.

When discussing the food movement(s) people tended to discuss personal, community, national, and sometimes international health; environmental concerns with agrifood system production and processes; and entrepreneurial aspirations with agriculture and food. A grower, a white female in her 40s, explains how she sees that the broadness of the food movement allows space for people and groups with all sorts of issues and concerns to come together:

> So it's really basic, it's food [laughter]. You can't get any more basic than that. You have to have it, and at the same time it's like a miraculous thing to have a seed and to put it into the ground and watch what happens with that seed. . . . So really basic, like everybody needs the food, but also miraculous and like wow,

> you know, to even tend to a living thing and so somewhere in the middle and all around the circle I guess is the food movement. And it's so varied, and the needs are so varied that there's room for so many people. So there's room for people who know the questions about the government or have questions about the government, there's room for people who want to know, you know, at every level.

Consistent with Granovetter's (1973) weak ties and Putnam's (1993) horizontal ties arguments, food issues can allow diverse people to join together for discussion and to work on their concerns. A school gardener, a white male in his 20s, referred to a "local food, organic food movement." He described it by saying, "I think [it is about] people being more interested in where their food comes from and how it's grown, who's growing it, and how they were treated. I think it's just the environmental and social implications of food is the best and most general way to put it." An educational grower, a white male in his 30s, explained how he sees the food movement, particularly as it relates to Kansas City:

> . . . there's definitely a push for kind of [a] back-to-the-earth movement, you know, from the 70s. Um, and that's anything from . . . pickling their own pickles to-, to having backyard chickens to-, to some of the more, you know, extreme-type, you know, living off yourself type mentality. But I think-, but I think just your average person too, even, you know, you're average suburbanite, also is-, just wants to have fresher stuff and better stuff. And-, and, uh, it's, it's available now. Where, you know, Kansas City in particular, um, you know, 15 years ago there-, it wasn't-, it wasn't much of an option.

He also shared a story about how empowering it is to grow your own food and raise your own animals to provide meals:

> Um, but it's also empowering to-, to have meals that you grew completely on your own [chickens clucking in the background] . . . I mean we had a meal last year that-, that we did, we had every single thing, including all the meat and everything that we had-, that I had-, that I had done with my hands. That's-, that's really cool. I appreciate that, and I was proud of it to look at that entire meal and think that I created all that through seed or, you know, a variety of ways.

For him, like most of the others, the food movement(s) will continue to generate interest and hopefully have positive impacts for many. He explained:

> Um, yeah, I think there's going to be more and more people . . . that are getting involved and more and more that are, um, doing it on a, um, on kind of a medium-scale. Not just a little bit in their backyard, but, you know, whether it was, you know, an acre that their grandparents had that no one's been using . . . Maybe it's their nineteen year old, you know, son or daughter that wants to get involved . . . . Um, I think-, I think the movement . . . it has force, it has momentum to it. I don't see it dying out. Um, especially in Kansas City. I think people are gonna keep on embracing it and keep on supporting it. And I think that the knowledge of people . . . with the fact that a lot of stuff is available on the Internet to learn how to do stuff. . . . and the addition with some of the local programs that are, uh, empowering people and teaching people that the-, the scale of the growers and the quality's going to get better too.

This grower acknowledges the power local programs can have in sharing knowledge that empowers people. As Allen (2004) and Bell (2004) mention, increasing knowledge can increase power. More people learning how to grow food and how to be better at it, while continuing to share this knowledge helps to build their power and potentially their strength in their identities as growers. As Allen (1999) and Lyson (2004) discuss, their participation in these activities could lead them to becoming more involved in agrifood issues. For Lyson, they could become active food citizens who want to be a part of the agrifood processes of how food gets to their plates and to the plates of others.

Similar to a number of people, a community gardener, a white male in his 20s, expressed that while he has heard people talk about movements that he does not necessarily connect to gardens that way. Instead for him it is more about community connections. He explained:

> . . . it's like the agriculture and the growing the food it really is a tool. Um, it's-, and to me it's the best tool there is, though. I don't want to . . . whittle it down to that it's-, it's not important. I think it's essential. But to me no matter how many good community gardens there are . . . if we don't have this-, a good healthy neighborhood, if we don't have a connection to the actual people then it's kind of to me value-, valueless . . . having community gardens is not going to save us and

> make our community better. It's about having connections and care for one another. And-, and learning to live together [laughs] is-, is probably the thing that I identify more with if I talk to people about it, I wouldn't say that I'm really involved in urban agriculture. I would probably [ ] say more, like . . . I want to be a good neighbor. . . .

Regarding the future of food movement-type activities, he commented, "I think they're [community gardens] going to be really successful wherever they're needed. And they're going to burn out and hopefully be successful again in the future where they're eventually needed." Again, he is emphasizing his point that the community needs to be involved in the gardens in its locale, and those places where the gardens are not as needed, that do not have the community buy-in, may not succeed. This is similar to Guthman's (2008) discussion about how some alternative agrifood efforts by whites in African American communities were not as well received as they expected. As it has been discussed, it may be more effective to involve the potentially affected community before setting up a garden or some other project and then expecting that they will support it and that the residents will want to be involved.

While they are involved in either a community-based project growing food or involved directly with food and health education in another capacity, a few of the interviewees expressed they do not necessarily feel there is a broad food movement. For example, a school gardener, a white female in her 30s, explained that while some of her friends are putting in raised beds in their backyards and there are more gardens it is because they are aiming to have quality foods that they can afford and not necessarily to be a part of a movement. She explained further:

> I mean, so, I don't know if it's like a movement as far as for the environment kind of movement . . . that would be awesome, it would be great if everybody was like, remember for awhile there everybody changed their light bulbs . . . and it was huge and there was commercials and everybody did it. I mean for the environment I think that would be great, but I think the main driving factor of the increase of urban gardens is, um, this food movement is the necessity to have good food, um,

> at a price you could afford. And it could be where you're not squishing your strawberries into mush on the Metro.

Similarly, in talking about whether there is an urban agriculture movement a community member, an African American in her 40s who works in a food desert, expressed that the urban agriculture groups and their activities are "just known about in pockets of the city." She explained:

> It-, it should be on the hearts and minds of all those who dwell in the city. Um, because it affects us all. Uh, it's very hush, hush where money is that can help promote [it], uh, and-, and that should be more publicly discussed so that more people can become involved, but the main issue a lot of times is the affordability. So it-, when you bring into the equation there is help through government agencies and not enough people know about [that] then that's-, that's one of the issues that needs to be brought to the forefront and should be more publicly discussed [is] how can we all get involved and not just a chosen few.

I asked her if she meant some of the organizations are getting more of the funding than others. She replied: "Absolutely, absolutely. I believe certain organizations are getting the funding because, uh, they know about it, but they're not willing to share that information so that more people can come into the know. You know what I mean?"

Summary

As the discussions with the BACC: FLUD project's interviewees show, many commodity farmers in Kansas are concerned about the future of their farms, particularly in relation to succession, financial concerns, and the challenges of keeping up with larger operations. The insights from these Kansas farmers are an example of how other farmers in similar situations may be experiencing the current agrifood system. The discussions with the Kansas City interviewees revealed that they are not just growing food because it is fun. Instead, many of them, regardless of their demographic, grower, or community member characteristics, are

concerned with how the agrifood system functions and how it affects them and others in their communities and, in many cases, in society at large, including commodity farmers. While the Kansas commodity farmers may not be thinking about organic fruits and vegetables, although some of them grow their own vegetable gardens, those I talked with in Kansas City are concerned that there needs to be more organic fruits and vegetables produced in and near the city. Not only that, but, overall, they are concerned with the impacts and potential impacts of human actions that contribute to climate change and how the lifestyles most Americans live and the pollution generated from these activities are causes for concern regarding the future of agriculture and food in the United States.

Currently urban agriculture and other forms of alternative agricultures are not having very much of a financial impact on large-scale agriculture. However, unlike large-scale agriculture, small-scale agriculture has more of an advantage to being responsive and flexible to changes in tastes and cultural trends (Hendrickson 2009). In the future, the knowledge and the flexibility to alter their production practices that these civic agriculture minded, urban growers and other smaller-scale agriculturalists have could be quite valuable in terms of assisting in strengthening the resiliency of communities. In addition, as the Kansas City interviewees discussed food movements are underway that are educating more people about agriculture and food and getting more people involved in related activities.

The next chapter is the conclusion. I provide a summary of the dissertation. It includes a discussion of the challenges that remain for the urban agricultural phenomenon and its participants. Strengths and limitations of the study and ideas for future research are also discussed.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

In the context of the U.S. agrifood system, through my fieldwork--participant observations, informal discussions, formal semi-structured interviews, and primary and secondary data analysis--I have been able to uncover how the agrifood system is viewed; the concerns people have about it; and what their thoughts are on the relations between civil society and the agrifood system. This analysis includes the voices of some commodity farmers in Kansas and numerous urban agriculture growers and community members in Kansas City. Through this research I have been able to answer my first research question: How do the relations between civil society and the U.S. agrifood system impact the level of fairness in the system? In addition, I have gained an in-depth understanding of who is participating in urban agriculture, including who is growing the food, why they grow, and how and to what extent they interact with their communities and other groups, including businesses and governmental personnel. This has allowed me to answer my second research question: To what extent are urban agricultural activities fostering fairness in the agrifood system, including access to fresh foods, civic engagement, and fulfilling careers, while also benefiting the environmental health of the city? In addition, this research has uncovered what the Kansas City urban agriculture participants think about the future of agriculture in Kansas City, what they believe the U.S. agrifood system should be and will likely be in the future, and what they envision for the future of food movement(s).

As discussed, there are governmental policies and programs that target agriculture and food issues. The Farm Bill is the predominant legislation that addresses agriculture and food in the United States. Agricultural assistance is provided to some producers on the one hand and food and nutritional assistance is provided to those in need who qualify on the other. While there

are those who trust or hope that farmers, the government, and agrifood businesses have their best interests in mind, most of the people I talked with in Kansas City are not happy with the current status of the agrifood system's relationships with agribusiness and the government. In their eyes and in agreement with critics, subsidies more often go to large-scale producers of commodities, including corn, soybeans, and wheat, than to smaller-scale producers of organic grains, fruits, and vegetables. Interviewees did not argue against the production of commodities as a whole, but, overall, they do think the food that is produced and how it is produced should be more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.

From African Americans to Caucasians, from educational growers to market farmers, and from those with less than a Bachelor's degree to having earned a Master's degree, Kansas City urban agricultural participants also critique the agrifood system more broadly. They do not see it as a fair system. At the same time, they are engaged in urban agricultural activities that are increasing fairness in the system. Kansas City is in a unique position for urban agriculture as it is located in two states surrounded by conventional, commodity farming which is largely supported by residents and the governments. This position offers challenges and opportunities. For example, as a challenge to the urban growers, there is more monetary and legislative support for commodity farming than there is for urban food production. On the other hand, while almost all of those I spoke with in Kansas City do not use synthetic inputs in their food production practices, many of them are quite familiar with this type of production due to their location and from having family members or friends involved in large-scale and in some cases small-scale food production. This familiarity allows participants the opportunity to see small-scale production as an option toward addressing the problems they see with their food choices and the larger agrifood system. This could hold true for other cities that are experiencing resurgence in

urban agriculture, particularly for those surrounded by commodity farming, who have this familiarity with food production, and who have significant amounts of vacant land like Kansas City.

As far as the critiques of the system, to begin with, while food typically travels thousands of miles from the fields to people's homes, it does not reach everyone. A number of the KC interviewees described what it is like to live in a food desert where it is challenging to get fresh, whole foods. The food that does travel long distances is viewed as less fresh, less nutritious, and less safe when synthetic chemicals have been used in the growing process or the distribution process compared to organic food grown close by, particularly when people grow it themselves. Additionally, while processed foods are offered in abundance at most grocery stores for low prices, many of those who want fresh, organic foods cannot afford the prices. This is another reason why there is such a draw from people and communities to learn to grow and to succeed at growing some of their own foods, while also calling for changes in the system to make fresh, whole foods more affordable and available.

Most of the KC interviewees are not satisfied with current governmental policies on farming and food. As mentioned, overall, the KC interviewees think there should be more incentives and programs for smaller-scale farmers, including urban growers, who grow organic fruits and vegetables. There are also critiques that not enough is being done to require companies to label GMOs, to address the over-reliance on fossil fuels, and that there is not enough action being taken to address climate change. Many KC interviewees discussed that the government should provide incentives to growers to produce a safe and healthy food supply, but it should not be in a manner that largely benefits some farmers over others. Lastly, food should be regarded as a human right. Many KC interviewees said it is the government's job to ensure that everyone has

access to food whether or not they can afford to buy it. Governmental food and nutrition assistance programs do provide aid to many, but, overall, KC participants do not think enough is being done between the government, the agrifood system, and society to provide access to whole, fresh foods.

Although Kansas City participants did not use the term civic agriculture, their concerns, visions, and activities point to the notion that agriculture should be more aligned with civic agriculture and not commodity agriculture as Lyson (2004) differentiates them. He also argues there are differences between civic farmers and civic agriculture. As it has been discussed, the Kansas commodity farmers associated with the BACC: FLUD project are more reflective of civic farmers than civic agricultural growers. The products they produce largely leave their communities and go into the dominant agrifood system. While they may be concerned with the business health of their communities and community well-being in general, overall, they are not engaged in food production activities and processes that link them directly to consumers in their locales. Their food production activities are mostly in-line with the dominant agrifood system. Overall, they are not trying to change how food could reach more people, how food production could be more integrated with their locales, or how agricultural production could be done organically; and they are not trying to change the agrifood system. This is not to say that they do not care whether or not people have food to eat, rather it is to point out that they are not necessarily trying to change the relationships between the agrifood system and civil society.

Overall, Kansas City participants think food should be produced along the lines of Lyson's civic agriculture. That is, it should be produced in ways that promotes its nutritional quality, that does not degrade the land, and that is connected to the people and the place where production occurs. There should be more small-scale producers. Farmers should be able to make

a living. People should be more educated on agriculture and food issues to increase their knowledge (i.e., Lyson's notion of agricultural literacy) and to promote wellness in the population. A few KC interviewees particularly mentioned that organic agriculture and food should be regarded more highly and supported more extensively by the populace, the government, and businesses. Organic, whole fresh foods should be readily available to everyone. The agrifood system should be fairer.

Overall, going against the pluralist view, the KC interviewees did refer to people with money and corporations as having more power in the United States than others. Inconsistent with the elite rule framework, participants in Kansas City urban agriculture do not feel hopeless or unorganized while they face elites. Instead, overall, they are hopeful, and they believe they have the ability to act (i.e., they have agency). They believe they are right to question who benefits from the dominant system, if the food is safe, and why fresh, whole foods are not more affordable for themselves and for others. In relation to the state-centered theories of Skocpol (1985) and others, again, overall, the KC interviewees have not been satisfied with how the U.S. state has performed regarding the agrifood system. One example discussed in some of the interviews is the critique of the state's hesitancy to call for the labeling of GMO products even though the majority of the population would like to see them labeled. The corporations involved with GMOs do not want labels to be required, but polls show that a growing percentage of the nation's residents do supporting labeling of GMOs.

In agreement with Domhoff's views regarding the strength of a corporate community to shape legislation and governmental programs to their benefit, overall, KC participants believe agribusinesses and their related interests are currently able to influence the governments to act in their favor more so than smaller growers and other members of civil society. Going against the

power of agribusinesses and their interests in dominating the agrifood system, opposition is coming from numerous angles and at a variety of levels, including grassroots and legislative efforts. However, as is shown with the 2012 failure to pass Proposition 37 in California, which would have required the labeling of GMOs, those in opposition are still looking for a major victory in favor of alternative agricultures.

What we are seeing in Kansas City is a rise in very small-scale food production and the institutions and consumers to support their operations. Numerous non-profit organizations collaborate with area businesses, governmental personnel, growers, and residents to provide programs, support, education, and networking opportunities. These diverse stakeholders are involved for a variety of reasons. This institutional support and this diversity are strengths for the participants in urban agriculture in Kansas City. As with the example of the creation of the Get Growing KC team, a number of participants came to believe they could be more effective in providing assistance with food production and other food related activities if they collaborated. That way they could share their particular skill sets and funding in a more coordinated way. The thinking is that they are better able to distribute funds to multiple projects via mini grants instead of just a couple of organizations using all of the funding to improve their programs while other programs struggle. As a community member in Wyandotte County mentioned, she thinks more people would get involved if they knew where the gardens were located. Through these collaborations, particularly those that involve diverse stakeholders, following Granovetter's (1973) weak ties argument and Putnam's (1993) horizontal ties and networks of civic engagement arguments, they are able to bring more diverse participants to the table because they are affiliated with people from differing social locations. This strength through institutional

support and local coordination could be something other urban agriculturalists in other cities may want to take notice of if they have not already.

As it has been discussed, there are a variety of manifestations of urban agricultural activities that are connecting people of various socio-economic statuses with fresh food, from home gardens to food banks with gardens and from community gardens to market farms. In blighted neighborhoods, business districts, and suburbs, gardens and farms can now be found and in increasing numbers. Farmers' markets are also on the rise, and some are offering opportunities for people to use SNAP benefits to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. Growers and community participants are diverse. For example, I spoke with men and women; younger and older people; Caucasians, African Americans, a Mexican American, and Asian Americans; poor to upper-middle class people; and they all have an interest in urban agriculture. Another added dimension to urban agriculture is that lower income and poor people are not just recipients of the programs and the produce, but they are increasingly becoming more of an integral part in growing food and participating in the programs to learn more about nutrition, cooking, and gardening. While some involved in urban agriculture in Kansas City strive to transform policies and the agrifood system, others are more specifically aiming to empower themselves and their communities in learning the skills to grow some of their own food, to eat fresh fruits and vegetables more frequently, and to strengthen their communities by participating in community activities and businesses.

KC growers' reasons for why they are growing food involve the following main themes: concerns for better nutrition; connecting with nature, food, and/or people; and serving others by connecting them with food. Additionally, some interviewees are also focused on educating youth and adults regarding balanced nutrition, food production, and, in some cases, entrepreneurial

skills. One grower explained how beneficial their garden is for their organization, including the staff, the kids, the teachers, and people who visit. He said people can go into the garden, such as the staff on a short break, and "find a moment of peace . . . and [a] little bit of-, of enthusiasm for seeing stuff grow [and] popping a strawberry in their mouth." He went on to express that "nature is just a wonder in that it's an equal opportunity inspirer." We shared a laugh as he continued to pull weeds in the garden bed. Connecting to nature, to food, and to others was seen as incredibly important to many I spoke with. Individual and community participation in these endeavors is increasing. Support for these activities is widespread. The growers and the community members feel access to food in Kansas City has been increasing with the urban agricultural and related activities, such as the mobile markets, and that, overall, they foresee access to food increasing for more people.

Consistent with Bellah et al's. ([1985] 1996) assertion that more people are becoming civically involved, being a part of a community or of communities is important to all of the growers. Many spoke of their communities as locale-based (DeLind 2002), while a few others spoke of community in terms of the peers they interact with and share gardening/farming knowledge with--what Carolan (2011) referred to as communities of practice. Growers and community members expressed it is important to work with other groups as they strive for their goals, whether that is, for example, increasing access to food in food deserts; educating children on health, food, and gardening; building community; or a combination of these goals. They expressed working with others expands their connections and the resources that are available to them (Tocqueville 1935; Putnam 1993; Tolbert et al. 1998; Tolbert et al. 2002; Lyson 2004; Morton et al. 2005).

Also as I learned through my fieldwork, these growers love to share their growing knowledge and experiences with one another and other interested parties. Knowledge helps to increase people's power (Allen 2004; Bell 2004). They want people to be excited about knowing where their food comes from in general, how they can produce some of it themselves if they choose to, and how to prepare fresh produce once they have it. Other than when done in one's yard or in a private space, gardening activities are public. The fact that plants and produce are tangible helps give growers a public voice where they can talk about food issues while physically showing people examples of the issue of concern. This helps people to not only be more civically involved, but it also helps them to be able to speak in public about their concerns (Eliasoph 1998). Many of the participants network not only to gain for themselves, but also to share. Reciprocity is engaged in on a regular basis to the benefit of those involved (Putnam 1993).

A few organizations, including Cultivate Kansas City and Kansas City Community Gardens were mentioned quite often as being great sources of knowledge, tools, and assistance. However, in Kansas City there is a wide network of growers and consumers that are connected to these organizations and others that strive to continue to engage in and support smaller-scale food production, local and regional distribution, and educational programming on food production and nutrition for children on up to the elderly and from poor people to the wealthy. As I learned through this research interviewing growers and community members involved in non-profit organizations, self-employment, or other projects with small budgets, they have to be able to be flexible within their organizations and in the ways they acquire and spend funding if they want to maintain their programming. This does not necessarily have to do with urban agriculture. Rather, it is something these types of projects face on a regular basis. As it has been described, the interviewees all feel connected to some type of community, and through these communities they

are able to join with others to socialize, and for many, to address their concerns. In this case it is food and the agrifood system. Reflecting Granovetter's weak ties (1973) and Putnam's (1993) horizontal ties, there are diverse networks of people that are characterized by the level of acquaintance or of peer relationships, and the relationships cut across various social standings and personal attributes of individuals. These networks of civic engagement allow people to build social capital (Putnam 1993), and, in many cases in Kansas City, they also are allowing residents, advocates, and city officials and city employees to work together on urban agricultural issues.

As mentioned, Kansas City, Missouri is one locale where urban agriculture activities have already spurred the updating of zoning and development codes to mirror support for these practices (Kunkel 2010). In June of 2013, under the name of H_20 to Grow, with the help of a coalition of food advocates and other community members, the Unified Government of Wyandotte County took a big step forward in support of urban food production by announcing a new program that has $50,000 available to assist eligible growers in installing water connections at their sites. This specific effort, and efforts like it, that involve city personnel are in-line with Somers (2008) calls from more advocacy directed at governments to address issues of concern to residents. By working in these types of coalitions they are further able to help shape the discourse around urban agriculture by being a part of defining policies and programs.

The relationships the growers are developing with consumers, restaurants, and other businesses that purchase their food; the businesses that support and sponsor their activities through donations and charity events; and other supporters near and far are important for community sustainability. For example, in relation to Granovetter (1985), economic relations at farmers' markets and CSAs are seen by many in alternative agricultural movements to have a

tendency to be more social and beneficial to civil society (Hinrichs 2000; Lyson 2004; Hendrickson 2009), because it is largely interactions with residents and businesses (i.e., the growers) and not just firm to firm relations as Granovetter examines. Relationships can develop between customers and the growers that move beyond purchasing food and into the realm of community building and concern for the well-being of all parties involved. These social relationships that are infused with the economic transactions are what Polanyi ([1944] 2001) argued needed to occur to keep economic matters from dominating society. Economics cannot dominate, there also needs to be social, and for Polanyi, cultural institutions.

Consistent with Lyson (2004) and civic agriculture, many believe jobs are or can be created and that gardens and farms in the city bring environmental benefits, such as cleaning and greening vacant lots. In addition, social gardening, for example community gardening or school gardening, not only provides gardening spaces for people to produce food, but it also provides social spaces for people to connect, socialize, and network.

Although the term food justice only came up a couple of times during my fieldwork, many of the activities and programs in place in Kansas City are in fact promoting it. Food justice is concerned with fairness in the agrifood system particularly as it relates to the intersections of race, class, and the environment, including food (Alkon and Agyeman 2011). For example, the Beans and Greens program is highly regarded, because it provides a weekly doubling match of up to $25 on SNAP benefits used at participating farmers markets, mobile markets, or other neighborhood markets; and it is seen as an increasingly successful program as the number of participants and the total amount matched has increased from year to year.

Many of the KC participants, some with a cautious optimism, envision that agriculture in Kansas City will continue to expand in the future. They believe more people will become

involved in both growing and purchasing. Many of the Kansas commodity farmers we talked to for the BACC: FLUD project mentioned they were concerned about the future of their farms, particularly as it relates to issues of succession, financial matters, and the increasing competition that exists with larger and high sales farms getting larger and increasing their profits. When KC interviewees critiqued the agrifood system they mentioned these concerns and also said the agrifood system needs to be more socially and environmentally focused in the future. Overall, they envision that food movement(s) and agrifood activities will continue across the United States, and they hope there will be changes that will benefit more people.

Challenges remain for the urban agricultural phenomenon. First of all, not everyone wants to grow food, increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables they eat, or use their time and energy to engage in food related behaviors and activities. In addition, some people do not want to or cannot afford to pay much for their food. Also, some people who may want to participate in some of the programs that are teaching people how to grow and assisting them in starting gardens may not have the resources to do so. In the interviews numerous people discussed that the costs are prohibitive for some, and it was mentioned that low credit scores may prevent many from being able to get loans or other assistance to participate. An interviewee remarked, ". . . say they have the will, the desire, and the need and maybe even a wonderful plan, that credit score can hold them back from moving forward." Many interviewees mentioned they live in food deserts, and they want quality, full-service grocery stores in their areas. Some also said the urban agricultural activities they are involved in, such as growing their own food, is to provide fresh foods for themselves and their families, and they did not mention that it is to try to change the dominant agrifood system.

While the numbers of people growing their own food at home, in community gardens, or in other types of gardens or farms is increasing, and they are building community and strengthening civil society while they do it; it is not the sole answer to combating institutional racism, crime, blight, and food insecurity. Food deserts are part of these larger social problems. As Poppendieck (1994; 1999; 2000) argues regarding charity food programs, the same can be said about urban agricultural initiatives, that they should not be used in place of the structural changes that need to happen in the nation that would reduce inequalities and manifest a society where sufficient resources, including food, are accessible to all residents. Also, prices for fresh, whole foods are perceived by some as high, and elevated food prices are often found in some areas compared to others, such as in the urban core compared to the suburbs. While zoning laws and ordinances in some areas have been updated to be more supportive of urban growers, there are still many municipalities that make growing food challenging. The work of advocacy organizations, such as the GKCFPC, that aim to enhance the regional and local food system for the betterment of the population are targeting these larger structural issues. The amount of food produced by U.S. urban agriculture is very small in comparison to what is produced by larger-scale commodity producers and their impacts on commodity agriculture appear minimal. However, these efforts in Kansas City and also in cities, such as Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, and New York City could be well on their way to having lasting impacts on a variety of social issues, including land use and agriculture; neighborhood and community sustainability; race relations; education; health and wellness; and fostering more fairness in the agrifood system.

Strengths, Limitations, Contributions, and Future Research

My study is an overview of urban agriculture in Kansas City. I have been able to link this phenomenon to Kansas commodity agriculture and the U.S. agrifood system. Compared to many

cities where urban agriculture is underway, Kansas City is uniquely situated with large-scale, conventional commodity production surrounding it on both sides of the Kansas and Missouri state border. While support for commodity agriculture by the governments and the residents is strong in both states, urban residents are moving forward with their aims to increase the production and consumption of locale based foods, whether people grow it for themselves, receive it through donations, or buy it from nearby gardens or farms. As discussed, KC participants' locale, their familiarity with food production, and the availability of land to grow on are assets to them in their urban agricultural projects. Cities in similar circumstances, particularly if they also have the institutional network of support as Kansas City does, may have great success with urban agriculture as well.

I specifically aimed to mainly speak with growers to share their perspective. In much of the alternative agrifood literature the voices shared are those from non-profit advocacy organizations, farmers' market managers, and consumers. For example, Allen et al. (2003) draw on interviews with leaders in agrifood initiatives (AFIs) in California, Johnston (2008) focuses on Food-Share in Toronto, and Hendrickson (2009) concentrates on the Kansas City Food Circle. I wanted to highlight the growers but also include insights from community members affiliated with urban agriculture. I spoke with five categories of growers and three categories of community members which is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength, because I talked to numerous people from a variety of categories, so I was able to see how people come at urban agriculture from various angles. It is also a weakness, because I maybe could have gotten more in-depth information but just focusing on one category of grower or community member like numerous other studies.

In this dissertation I have built upon Lyson's concept of civic agriculture. I have brought together literature on civil society and literature on alternative agrifood activities and movements in the examination of urban agriculture in one locale. Overall, utilizing the civil society literature I have been able to show how the views and actions of KC urban agriculture participants are exemplifying the concepts of voluntary associations, civic engagement, civic participation, civic community, social capital, networking, weak ties, horizontal ties, and embeddedness and how this relates to civic agriculture and fairness in the agrifood system. Civic agriculture is calling for an agrifood system that is fairer than the current dominant system. Following Lyson, a fairer agrifood system would include more sustainable and smaller-scale production that is socially embedded, more locale-based, and more interested in community well-being and economic success. In addition, it is not predominantly focused on profits and export markets. Urban agriculture can be civic agriculture, which means it can be a phenomenon that is manifesting more fairness in the system. At the same time, as my findings show, agriculture in Kansas City's urban core has the additional implications of bringing to light race and class-based inequalities. The findings show how social justice based urban agriculture is increasing access to food and opening spaces for diverse people to work together in growing food and related activities. This case of urban agriculture in Kansas City is an example of how the civicness of urban agriculture can contribute to food security; community revitalization and sustainability; and, in some cases, local economic development.

By also including insights from the alternative agrifood literature, including, for example, typical demographic characteristics of alternative agrifood participants and discussions of food justice, I have been able to show that the case of urban agriculture in Kansas City is more encompassing of diverse people than has been revealed in other studies. People of various social

classes and races are participating in urban agriculture in Kansas City and, overall, KC interviewees believe this will continue into the future. By focusing on one case of urban agriculture I have been able to show that, overall, urban agriculture in Kansas City is thriving as an example of civic agriculture which is promoting fairness in the agrifood system. While producing food on their own, within their communities, or by directly purchasing or receiving food from growers in their areas that they trust, people are able to be more knowledgeable about where their food is coming from and what is or is not in their food. They are also able to participate more in the production or the distribution process. All of these activities point to increasing fairness in the agrifood system--access to fresh food is increasing and people are becoming more civically engaged in food production and distribution. The phenomenon has widespread support, and it is increasingly becoming a part of the social structure in numerous neighborhoods and communities. It is helping to provide social spaces where people can join together to work; to socialize; and to talk about their concerns, visions, and dreams all while food is being grown and distributed in a more community-based way compared to the dominant agrifood system.

Urban agriculture is an umbrella term that captures many participants and activities. Future research could include focusing on a specific type of urban agricultural participant and activity, such as community gardeners or market growers, and then comparing multiple cases in a specific city to each other or across cities. Conducting a focused study on how people in poverty are participating in urban agriculture and what they think about it would be invaluable.

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Appendix A - Informed Consent Statement

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Exploring Agriculture in Kansas and Beyond
Dr. Laszlo J. Kulcsar, Principle Investigator (P.I.)
Sarah S. Beach, Co-Principle Investigator (Co-P.I.)

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of the study is to explore the different styles of agriculture in Kansas and Kansas City, people's experiences with it, and their views on the present and future of agriculture and the U.S. food system. I would like to talk with you because you are over the age of 18 and you are one of the following: a grower, a staff member of a non-profit and/or charitable organization, or a community member. Over the next few months to a year, approximately 30-60 individuals will be invited to participate in this study. You will be asked to answer questions about your participation in agriculture and your views on the present and future of agriculture and the food system in the United States. The interview will take approximately 45-90 minutes of your time.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are no known potential risks associated with this study. There are no known benefits to participating, but I hope you will enjoy our conversation about your experiences and your views. If material is presented and/or published from this study, then you are welcome to attend the presentation and to receive the published information.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The interview will be held in a mutually agreeable, private or public location. Anything that you share during the interview will be kept confidential. In addition, your individual privacy will be maintained in all written and published data resulting from this study. Pseudonyms will be used in place of real names. I will not reveal any information that could expose the identities of the individuals. The digital recordings will be stored in a secure location. At the end of the study, all digital recordings will be erased and all other research materials will be permanently stored in a secure location.

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION: If you decide to participate in this project, you are agreeing that you understand this project is research, that your participation is completely voluntary, that you may withdraw your consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which you may otherwise be entitled.

If you agree to take part in this study, I will ask you if you are willing to participate in the interview and if you are willing to let me record it. Your answer will be recorded for my records, and a copy of this statement will be given to you at the end of the interview.

CONTACT AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:
* Dr. Laszlo J. Kulcsar, (P.I), Associate Professor, Sociology (785) 532-4959, kulcsar@ksu.edu
* Sarah Beach, (Co-P.I.), PhD Student, Sociology, (785) 341-2628, srhbeach@ksu.edu

* Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

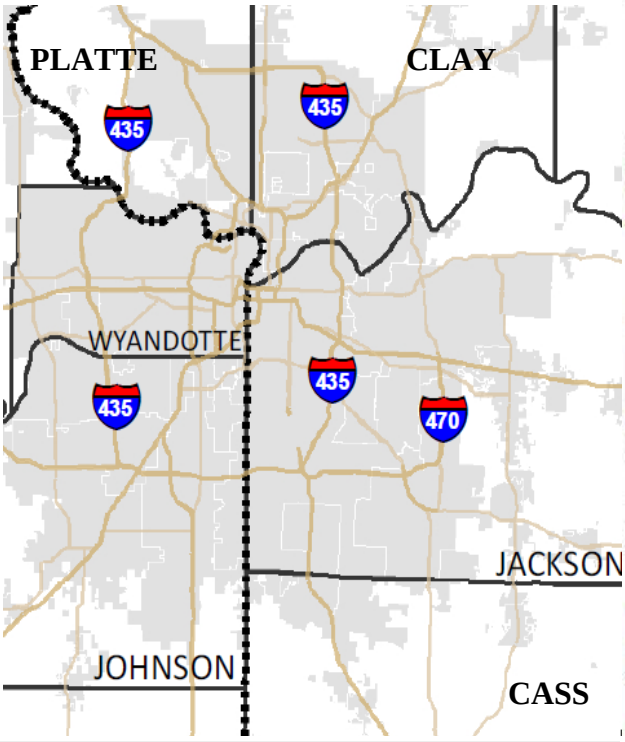
APPROVAL DATE OF PROJECT: May 30, 2012

EXPIRATION DATE OF PROJECT: May 29, 2013

Appendix B - The Central Core of the Kansas City Area

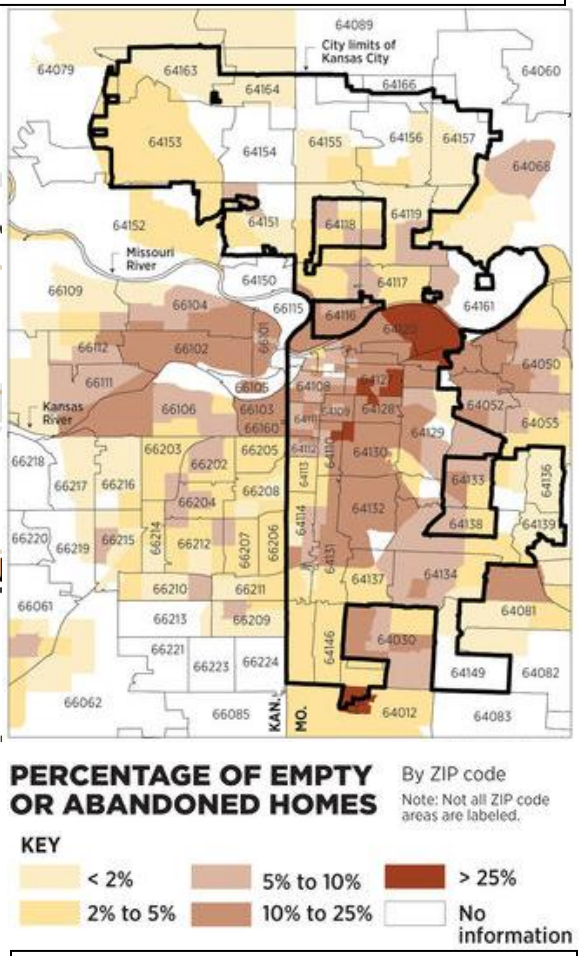
Figure B.1: Comparison of Percentage of Vacant Homes by County

Figure B.1a Six Central Counties of the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)



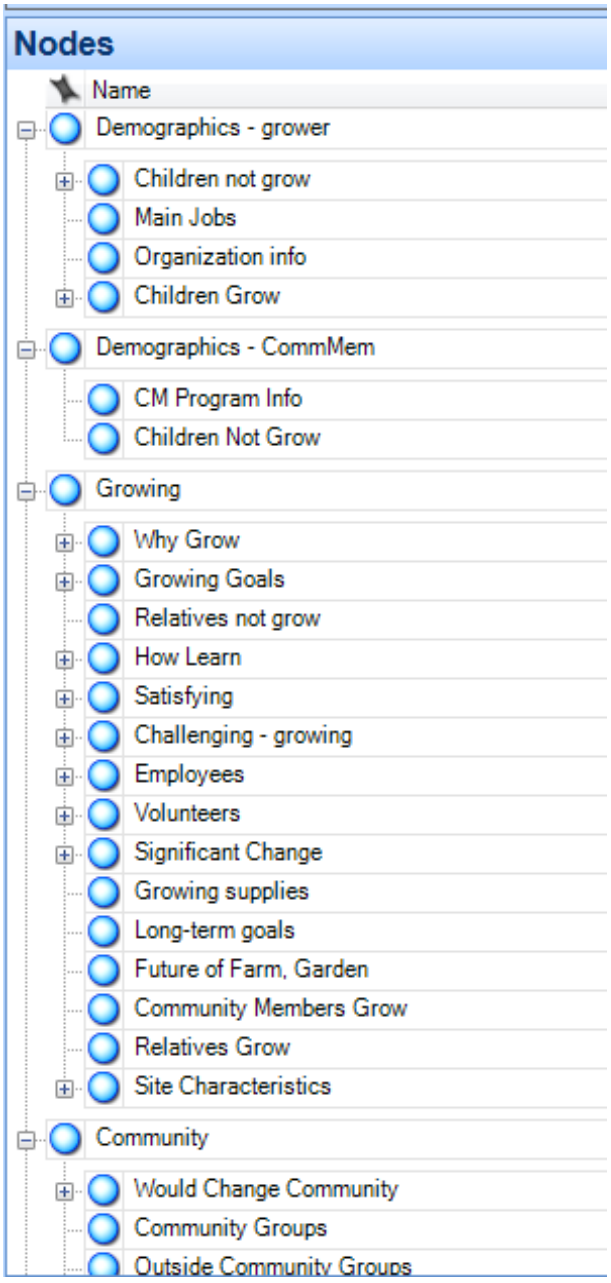
Source: MARC. 2010. www.marc.org/gis

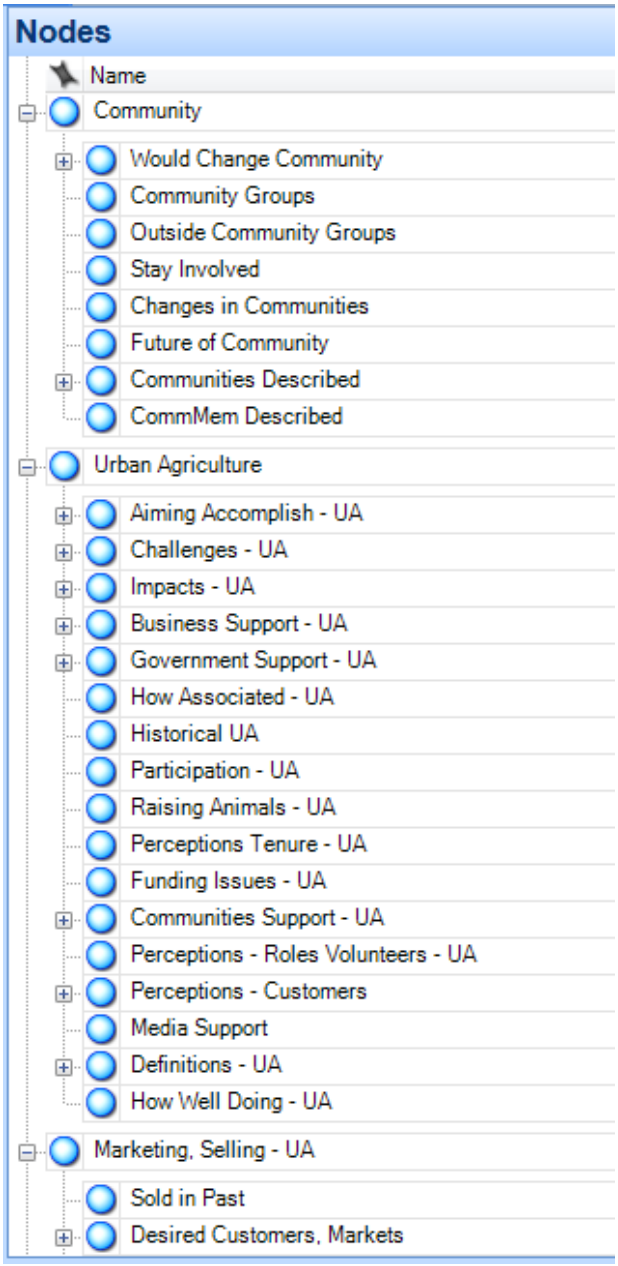
Figure B.1b Percentage of Empty or Abandoned Homes

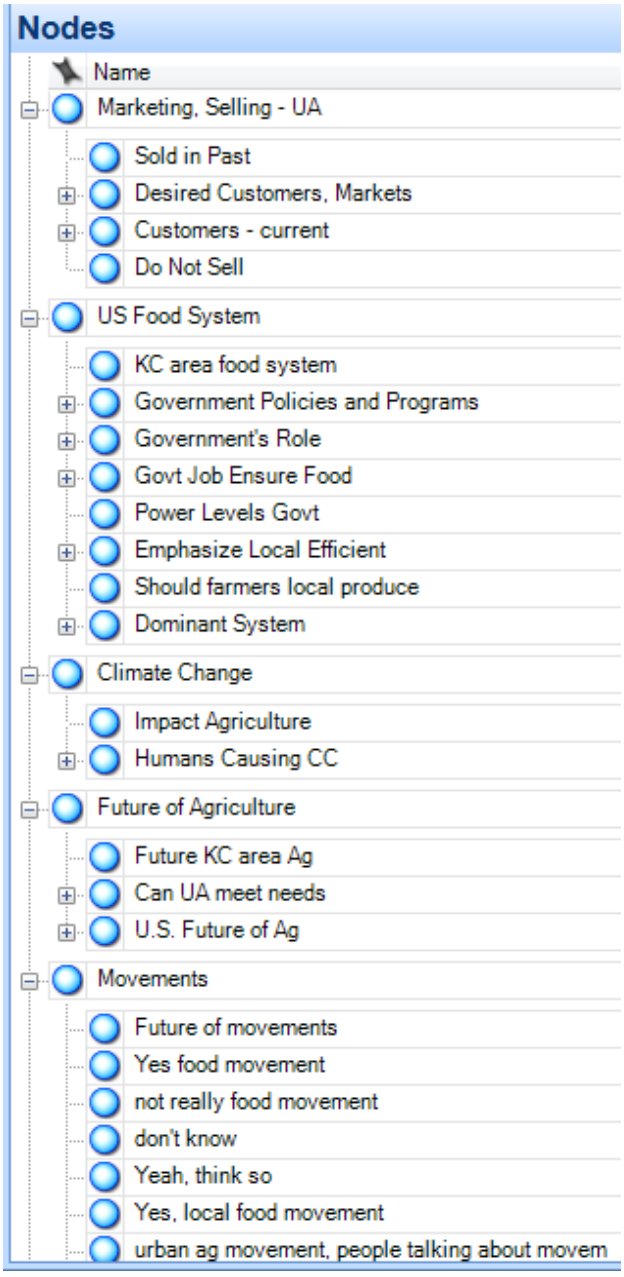


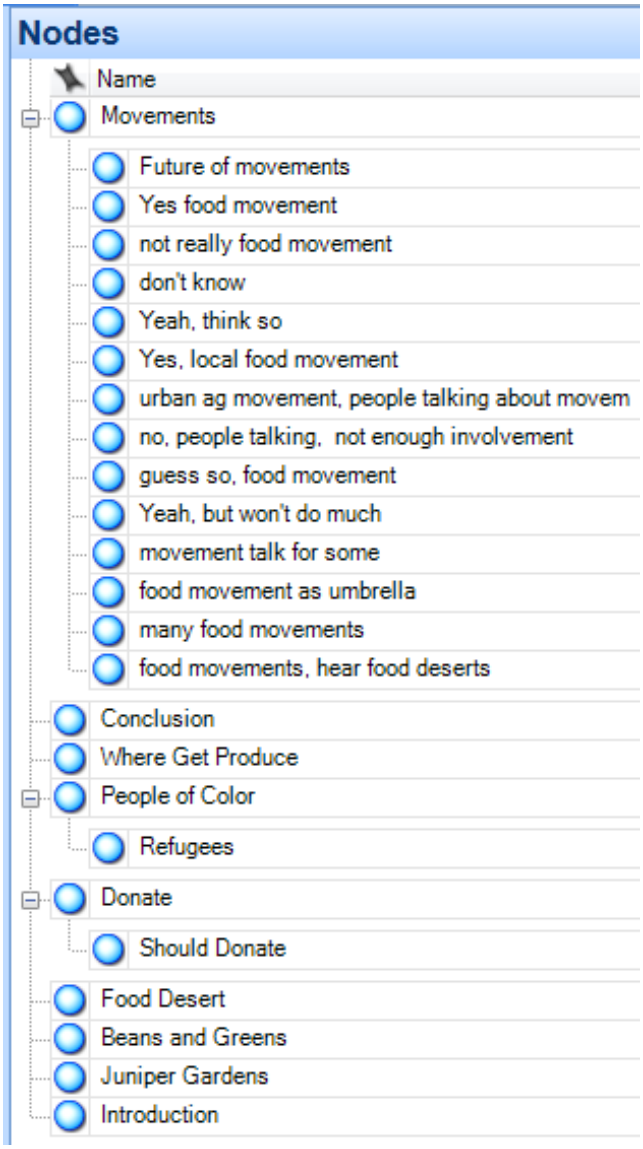
Source: Edmiston's estimates reported by Mansur 2011. *The Kansas City Star.*

Appendix C - Main Codes and Sub-codes




Nodes
Name
Community
Would Change Community
Community Groups
Outside Community Groups
Stay Involved
Changes in Communities
Future of Community
Communities Described
CommMem Described
Urban Agriculture
Aiming Accomplish - UA
Challenges - UA
Impacts - UA
Business Support - UA
Government Support - UA
How Associated - UA
Historical UA
Participation - UA
Raising Animals - UA
Perceptions Tenure - UA
Funding Issues - UA
Communities Support - UA
Perceptions - Roles Volunteers - UA
Perceptions - Customers
Media Support
Definitions - UA
How Well Doing - UA
Marketing, Selling - UA
Sold in Past
Desired Customers, Markets

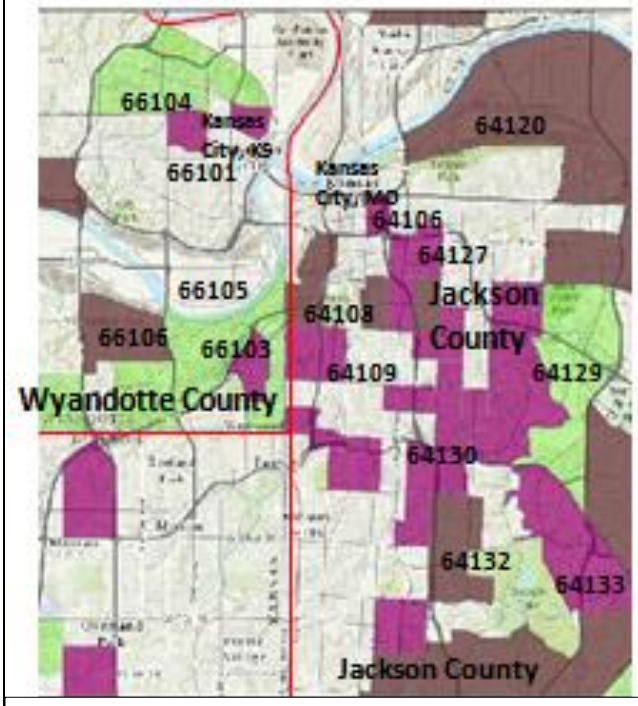

Nodes
Name
Marketing, Selling - UA
Sold in Past
Desired Customers, Markets
Customers - current
Do Not Sell
US Food System
KC area food system
Government Policies and Programs
Government's Role
Govt Job Ensure Food
Power Levels Govt
Emphasize Local Efficient
Should farmers local produce
Dominant System
Climate Change
Impact Agriculture
Humans Causing CC
Future of Agriculture
Future KC area Ag
Can UA meet needs
U.S. Future of Ag
Movements
Future of movements
Yes food movement
not really food movement
don't know
Yeah, think so
Yes, local food movement
urban ag movement, people talking about movem


Nodes
Name
Movements
Future of movements
Yes food movement
not really food movement
don't know
Yeah, think so
Yes, local food movement
urban ag movement, people talking about movem
no, people talking, not enough involvement
guess so, food movement
Yeah, but won't do much
movement talk for some
food movement as umbrella
many food movements
food movements, hear food deserts
Conclusion
Where Get Produce
People of Color
Refugees
Donate
Should Donate
Food Desert
Beans and Greens
Juniper Gardens
Introduction

Appendix D - Maps of KC Food Deserts and KC Urban Gardens and Farms

Figure D.1: Maps of KC Food Deserts and KC Urban Gardens and Farms

Figure D.1a KC Food Deserts, 2010



Green - Low Income, Low Access to supermarkets
Purple – Low Vehicle Access
Brown – Low Income, Low Access, & Low Vehicle Access
(Colors are by census tract)
Source: USDA-ERS 2013c, USDA 2010 data
(Numbers are zip codes)

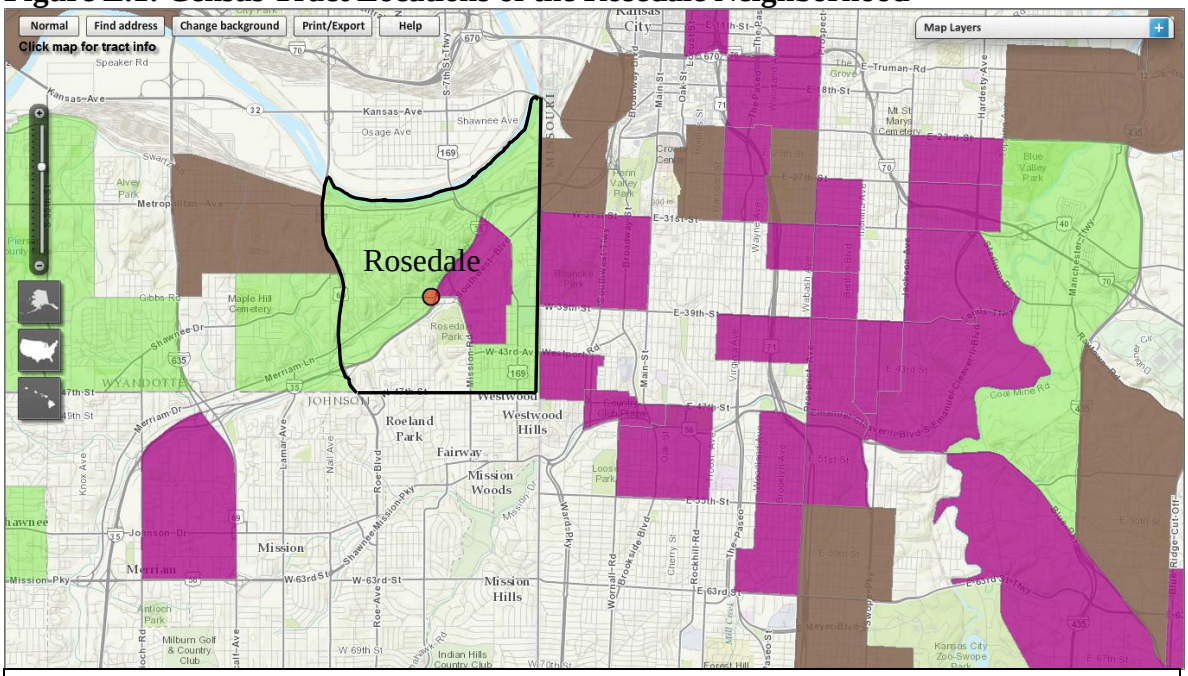
Figure D.1b KC Gardens and Farms, 2012

- Charitable gardens
- Community gardens
- School gardens
- Educational gardens
- Market gardens/farms
- Farmers' markets

(Numbers are zip codes)

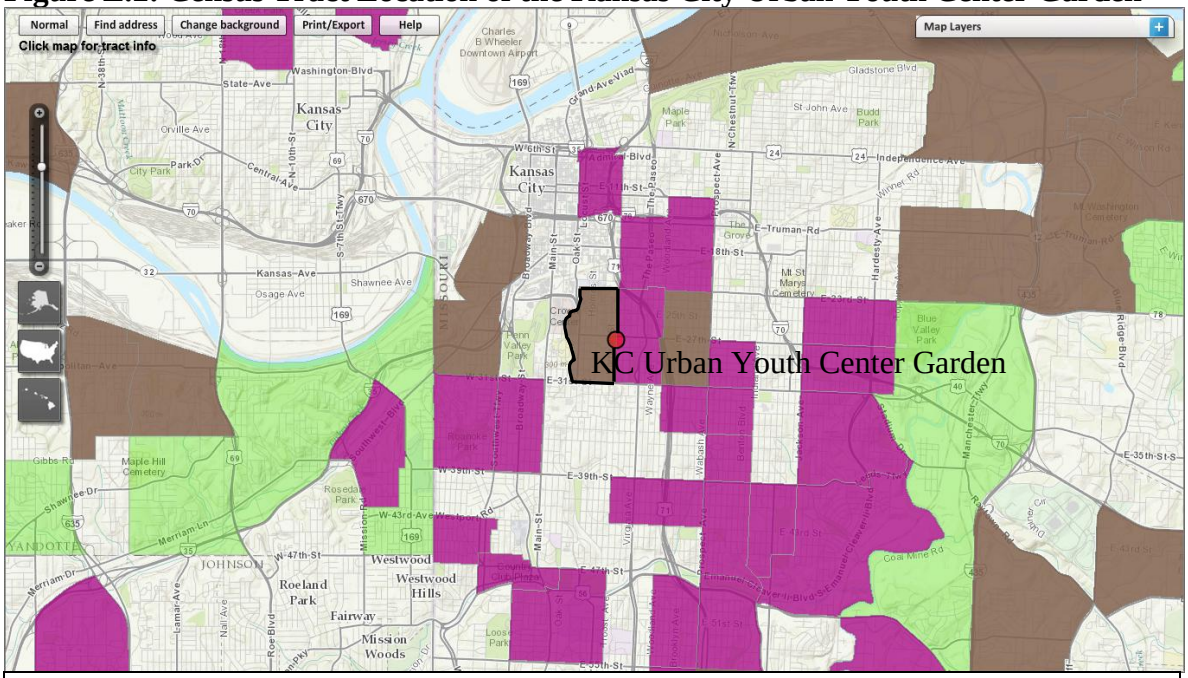
Appendix E - Census Tract Locations of Select Gardens

Figure E.1: Census Tract Locations of the Rosedale Neighborhood



Source: USDA-ERS. 2013c. "Food Access Research Atlas."

Figure E.2: Census Tract Location of the Kansas City Urban Youth Center Garden



Source: USDA-ERS. 2013c. "Food Access Research Atlas."